

REX A. WADE

DOCUMENTS  
OF  
SOVIET HISTORY

3

LENIN'S HEIRS

1923-1925



ACADEMIC INTERNATIONAL PRESS

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OF  
SOVIET HISTORY

EDITED BY  
REX A. WADE



VOLUME 3  
LENIN'S HEIRS  
1923-1925



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# Appreciation

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*Stephanie Fawcett*

*for her assistance in the preparation of this volume and previous ones.*

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has made a tremendous contribution to their completion,  
and is deeply appreciated.*



**DOCUMENTS OF SOVIET HISTORY, VOLUME 3, LENIN'S HEIRS,  
1923-1925. Edited by Rex A. Wade**

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# CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	<i>viii</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>xii</i>
<b>1 THE YEAR 1923</b>	
The Theatrical Situation in Soviet Russia—An Assessment by Lunacharsky. 1923	1
Club and Factory Theaters. 1923	3
Administrative Exile. 3 January 1923	8
Lenin, "Better Fewer, But Better." 2 March 1923	10
Religion and the Soviet State—Trial of the Catholic Clergy. 22 March–2 April 1923	19
Resolution on Anti-Religious Agitation and Propaganda. 25 April 1923	29
On Party Organization—12th Party Congress. 25 April 1923	30
Resolution on the Nationality Question. 25 April 1923	35
The Best Soviet Teachers. April–June, 1923	42
The Closing of a Monastery. 16 May 1923	44
The Anti-Religious Campaign: "The Religious Foolishness." 25 May 1923	45
Implementing the New Nationality Policy. 12 June 1923	47
A Public Disputation of Futurism and the Arts. July 1923	51
The Famine: Resolution of Appreciation for the American Relief Administration. 10 July 1923	53
Trotsky on Culture and Problems of Life. 10 July 1923	54
Habits and Custom. 11 July 1923	60
"Vodka, the Church and the Cinema." 12 July 1923	64
The Party Leadership Denounces Trotsky and the Forty-Six for Factionalism. 27 October 1923	66
People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate. 12 November 1923	68
Formation of the OGPU—The Unified State Political Administration. 15 November 1923	73
Zinoviev on the Party and Workers' Democracy. 1 December 1923	74
"On Building the Party"—Attempted Compromise Between Trotsky and the Trimvirate. 5 December 1923	82
American Refusal to Recognize the Soviet Government. 6–18 December 1923	89
Trotsky, The New Course—I: Letter to the Central Committee. 8–10 December 1923	90
Zinoviev's Rejoinder to Trotsky's "New Course" Letter. 15 December 1923	95

Stalin Responds to the Critics of the Party Leadership. 15 December 1923	100
The Immediate Tasks of Economic Policy. 24 December 1923	107
Trotsky, The New Course—II. 28 and 29 December 1923	119
An Opposition Critique of the Party's Economic Policy. 29 December 1923	131

## 2 THE YEAR 1924

Party Denunciation of Trotsky, The Other Oppositionists and "Petty Bourgeois Tendencies." 18 January 1924	134
"Farewell, Ilyich"—The Party Leaders Eulogize Lenin. 26 January, 1924	140
The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. 31 January 1924	147
Resolution of the Congress of Soviets on Diplomatic Recognition by Great Britain. 2 February 1924	156
Rakovsky's Speech at the Opening of the Anglo-Soviet Conference. 14 April 1924	157
Stalin, The Foundations of Leninism. April 1924	161
Agreement Between China and the U.S.S.R. 31 May 1924	183
The Party on Press and Literature. 31 May 1924	189
Trotsky, Literature and Revolution. 29 July 1924	194
Agreement between the U.S.S.R. and the Autonomous Government of the Three Eastern Provinces of China. 20 September 1924	200
Statement by Karakhan Regarding the Return of the Chinese-Eastern Railroad to the Soviet Union. 5 October 1924	204
The "Zinoviev Letter" and Relations with Great Britain. 24 October 1924	205
Rakovsky Denounces the "Zinoviev Letter." 25 October 1924	208
Trotsky—Lessons of October. November 1924	209
"How One Should Not Write the History of October." 2 November 1924	222
Kamenev—The Party and Trotskyism. 18 November 1924	232
Stalin—Leninism or Trotskyism? 19 November 1924	238
Chamberlain Elaborates British Objection to Soviet Behavior. 21 November 1924	246
Soviet Reply to Chamberlain's Note and Denunciation of the "Zinoviev Letter." 28 November 1924	247
Soviet Response to the British Note Renouncing the Trade Treaty. 28 November 1924	249
Preobrazhensky, The Law of Primitive Socialist Accumulation. November 1924	250
Bukharin on the Economic Controversy and the Defense of NEP. 12 December 1924	257
Stalin, Socialism in One Country Versus Permanent Revolution. 17 December 1924	277

## 3 THE YEAR 1925

An Approved List of Proletarian Literature. January 1925	284
Chicherin on British-Soviet Relations. 4 January 1925	287

Trotsky's "Resignation." 15 January 1925	288
Trotsky's Dismissal from his Military Positions. 17 January 1925	291
Stalin's Speech to the Plenum of the Central Committee on the Army and International Affairs. 19 January 1925	297
Convention and Economic Cooperation Between Japan and the U.S.S.R. 20 January 1925	299
Stalin on Lenin. 21 January 1925	305
Stalin on the International Situation and the Tasks of the Communist Parties. 22 March 1925	305
The Central Committee Resolution on Literature. 18 June 1925	308
Chicherin on Events in China and Relations with Great Britain. 1 July 1925	311
Trotsky Repudiates Eastman's Account of the Political Struggle in the Soviet Union. 1 July 1925	314
Agreement Between Poland and the U.S.S.R. Regarding the Settlement of Frontier Disputes. 3 August 1925	318
Control Figures for the Soviet Economy, 1925-1926. October 1925	320
The Soviet Union and the League of Nations. 23 November 1925	328
The Fourteenth Party Congress—Reports and Debates. 18-23 December 1925	329
The Fourteenth Party Congress Endorses the Stalin-Bukharin Leadership. 23 December 1925	363
The Attack on Zinoviev's Control of the Leningrad Party Organization. 28 December 1925	369
Rules of the All-Union Communist Party. 31 December 1925	371
<i>Documents by Main Topics</i>	383
<i>Glossary</i>	386
<i>Sources Cited</i>	389
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	391
<i>Permissions</i>	391
<i>Indexes</i>	
Index of Personal Names	392
Index of Subjects	394
Index of Institutions	397
Index of Geographic and Place Names	399

## PREFACE

Researchers who need documentary materials on the history of the Soviet Union previously have not had a single source to which they can turn. They—scholars, students, journalists, government employees, others—have had to hunt through a large number of diverse works, usually specialized by time period, topic or the organization that produced them. To do this successfully often requires considerable prior knowledge of the subject and about the document(s) needed, more than most users would have. Even then many sources, especially for the period before World War II, can be found only in the largest and most specialized libraries and thus are not available to most potential users. If found, many of the documents are incomplete, while others lack the contextual information needed by most readers today. Some important documents, of course, are available only in Russian.

This collection brings together the major documents of Soviet history in a multi-volume set which will cover the period from 1917 to the 1990s. It seeks to select the most important documents, those which best explain the development and policies of the Soviet Union. This includes not only those pertaining to politics, but also those concerning culture and the arts, education, the family, international relations, economics, and other aspects of Soviet society and history. A distinct effort has been made to go beyond government and party pronouncements, which all too often are the sole content of document collections. At the same time it must be recognized that such materials are an exceptionally important part of the documentary record and must be heavily represented. Given the nature of the Soviet system, certain leaders loom especially large and authoritative in some periods and their writings and statements are therefore heavily represented in the respective volumes. Both opposition and unofficial voices also play a role at times, and they too are represented.

Only contemporary documents are used, that is, those originating at the time. Memoirs and other retrospective writings, including “diaries” which have been rewritten, are not included. In making the selections for this collection I have attempted to select documents that (1) have long run significance for understanding the Soviet Union in that they set forth fundamental policies and principles, (2) mark important events of Soviet history and development, (3) illustrate the debates on major issues, or (4) suggest the temper of the times. Given these objectives, selection generally ignores whether a document is well-known or rare, although in some instances the latter characteristic can tip the balance in favor of inclusion. I acknowledge that no two people would make exactly the same selection out of the thousands of documents available, but I believe that the majority would agree

on the inclusion of most of those found here and hope that all will find this selection reasonable as well as valuable.

Each volume in this set covers a differing number of years. Some years and periods produced a larger number of important debates, decisions and documents than did others, and therefore the time span of each volume depends on the number of important documents (and their length) in given years. This seems preferable to forcing the documents artificially into a uniform number of years for each volume. There are practical limitations on the size of such a collection, however, and space does impose its own restraints on selection; "importance" must be defined at least in part by the amount of space available. This collection is projected to run about twelve volumes, which length seems a good compromise between the effort to include a larger number and wider range of important documents than any general collection has done hitherto, and the exhaustion of both editor and users.

The documents are arranged chronologically rather than grouping them by topic. While each method has advantages, the chronological approach is preferred for a collection such as this. It gives a better sense of historical development and in many instances makes clearer how events and issues crowded in upon one another, influenced each other, and how the leaders had to grapple with many pressing problems simultaneously. Moreover, a single document often relates to several topics. For readers wanting material on a specific topic, the subject index should lead them to all documents on that subject as well as to shorter references within other documents. A listing of documents by main topics also is included for quick reference.

A headnote is provided for each document for the purpose of placing the document in its historical framework, to indicate its significance and the more important issues it raises, and to make the necessary clarifications for readers. These headnotes are rather more extensive than in most document collections, on the assumption that most readers will have little knowledge of the historical context of the document.

One of the important principles guiding this collection is to publish each document in its entirety whenever possible. Deletion by editing for space can cause unintended shifts in meaning, and might exclude exactly those portions which a given reader needs. In some cases documents which simply are too long to be included in full, yet are too important to leave out, have been edited in order to include them. Such instances are noted in the headnote to each document and marked in the text by standard ellipses (...). Readers should be aware that some Soviet writers had a fondness for using ellipses for effect in their writings and so, in order to avoid confusing those with editor's omissions, the abridgement of a document is always noted in the headnote. Some peripheral matter, such as the names of signatories of formal government decrees, laws and treaties, usually are not included unless there is a special reason to do so. These were generally a formality and take up a great deal of space better used for additional documents. When the signature of a particular official is of importance, it either is included or indicated in the headnote.

All parenthetical references in the documents are those of the original author; my very few editorial clarifications within texts are marked by brackets with the

initials R.W.—[R.W.]. All notes at the foot of the page are ones appearing in the original document. Many documents have passages in italics or bold print, and these are given as per the original. These usually were included in translations. I have attempted to reinstate them where they were dropped by the translator from the Russian original, keeping in mind that in some instances there are different Russian versions, especially of early proclamations.

Within documents, the spelling and usage of the original translators generally has been retained. There seems to be little profit in trying to force general stylistic uniformity on the translated documents. Some especially archaic or confusing usages, such as *commissionary* for *commissar*, *workmen's* for *workers'*, etc., have been replaced by the more common modern term. British and American spelling are retained according to the respective translators, except where the cold logic of the modern computer has homogenized them beyond the intent of the editor. Minor corrections—obvious grammatical and spelling errors, archaic or confusing terminology, a word or two of retranslation, etc.—have been made “silently,” that is to say, without noting it in every instance. All substantial modifications of translations are noted.

Russian names and words in the headnotes are given in the slightly simplified Library of Congress transliteration style familiar to readers of English, with diacritical marks and hard and soft sign omitted, and the *sky* rather than *skii* ending for family names (Trotsky, Lunacharsky). Within the documents they are generally given according to the translators' usage except in instances where names had been transliterated in an unusual manner. To alleviate possible confusion, variant name spellings are listed in the index with cross-reference to the standard spelling.

For the benefit of those unfamiliar with Russian and the variations possible when it is transliterated into Latin alphabet, introduction to some of the more common ones might be helpful. One set of variations comes from two Russian letters, one of which is transliterated variously as *iu*, *yu*, or *ju*, and the other as *ia*, *ya*, or *ja*. Another common variation comes from the insertion of the letter *y*, most often before *e* to make *ye* or instead of *i* in connection with another vowel. Another common insertion is the letter *t* in front of *ch*. The apostrophe mark (') may be used to indicate the Russian soft sign or it may be omitted. Most readers are familiar with the three main sets of variations of name ending: the *-sky*, *-skii* or *-ski*; the *-ov* (*ev*), *-of* (*ef*) or *-off* (*eff*); the use of *-a* or *-aya* in some family names to indicate a woman (Stepanov/Stepanova, Krupskii/Krupskaia), which translators may or may not use. There are other variations, but these are the most common ones and the ones most likely to bother a reader of this volume.

The various party and government names used by different Russian authors and translators deserves special attention. The government formed in October 1917 was called the Council of People's Commissars, but is often referred to by the Russian acronym *Sovnarkom* and sometimes by the English initials CPC. It was approved by the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which also created an executive body to act for the Congress between its meetings—the Central Executive Committee, which is often referred to in documents by its

initials, CEC (English) or TsIK (Russian). It also is important to keep these initials distinct from the initials sometimes used for the Central Committee of the Communist Party (C.C. or CC in English and TsK in Russian). The term "soviet" means in Russian "council;" many authors retain the Russian word soviet, now familiar to English readers, but some use council in the title of institutions containing that term. The Glossary will help readers unfamiliar with these and other Russian terms of the period, as will the headnote to documents containing them.

Sometimes there are variant dates for documents, among them the date when a resolution was introduced and when it was passed, the sending and receiving dates of a document, or the date when a law was passed by the Council of People's Commissars, when it was published in the newspapers, and when it was published in the official gazette of laws. Thus readers may find a given document dated differently in different sources. In most cases the earliest verifiable date when action was taken or a document created has been used.

Many of the documents given herein are being published for the first time in their complete form in English, and some for the first time in English at all, and yet others for the first time in a readily available source. The source for each document is given immediately following the document. A short form reference is used, and the reader who wishes can find the full citation in the list of sources cited. For some documents both an English and a Russian language source are given. For a single document this means that an English translation existed but with some deletions and that the missing passages have been added by the editor from the Russian source in order to make the document complete. In a few instances where two documents are given under one heading the two source references (of whatever language) refer to the different sources for the respective documents.

*Rex A. Wade*



## INTRODUCTION

By 1923 the Communist Party and Soviet state seemed more secure than at any time since the seizure of power in 1917. The New Economic Policy (NEP) introduced in 1921 was beginning to yield results and the country was on the road to recovery from the economic ravages of war, civil war and War Communism. The regime had overcome its political and military foes and survived the hostility of foreign powers. New problems and new anxieties were appearing, however, making these years of “high NEP” ones of uncertainty and controversies.

Central to the era was the death of Lenin and the power struggle which it unleashed among his political heirs. Lenin’s illness had already constrained his political activity before 1923, and then a new stroke early that year removed him from even limited political participation. For the first time he is not the dominant figure and author in these volumes; his only contribution comes in early 1923. Even before he died in January 1924, however, the struggle for succession to his political leadership began in earnest.

The power struggle lasted to the end of the decade. Its first stage is perhaps the dominant theme of this volume, as the several major Party leaders struggled to define the issues separating them and to stake out their own particular positions. During Lenin’s last illness a “troika” or “triumvirate” (both terms were widely used at the time) emerged to provide the leadership of the Party. The members were Grigorii Zinoviev, Lev Kamenev, and Joseph Stalin. All three were long time Bolsheviks and associates of Lenin, and all had played key roles in various stages of Party and state history. Of the three, Zinoviev probably was viewed, at least initially, as the leading figure of the triumvirate, although in retrospect Stalin’s power even then can be seen clearly. Theirs, however, proved a short-lived alliance.

Critics of the leadership triumvirate were numerous among prominent Party figures, especially among what might be called the second tier of leadership just below the Politburo, but the most dangerous critic and main rival was Leon Trotsky. Many people considered Trotsky second only to Lenin in the role he had played in establishing the Soviet state, and probably was also second only to him in terms of being well-known both at home and abroad. Many thought him the likely candidate to succeed Lenin in the leadership of the Party. Trotsky suffered, however, from serious handicaps. He was a relative newcomer to the Party, having joined only during the Revolution of 1917, and had a long history before 1917 of opposition to Lenin and the Bolsheviks. Several of his policy positions ran counter to the views or interests of the bulk of the party’s mid-level leadership and seemed to many others to be out of touch with the realities of the time. He seems to have had serious difficulties finding a way to wage a successful inner-party

struggle, which may or may not have been related to the fact that he also was ill during much of this period.

This volume chronicles the debates between Trotsky and the Triumvirate (supported by Nikolai Bukharin), and the defeat of Trotsky and the beginning of his ouster from key positions. This, however, did not end the power struggle. A new stage quickly emerged in 1925 as Zinoviev and Kamenev became alarmed over Stalin's growing power and sought to counter him. This led, by the end of 1925, to a new stage of the power struggle and the emergence of a new leadership bloc headed by Stalin and Bukharin. The volume ends with Zinoviev being stripped of some of his key power positions, the beginning of his and Kamenev's downfall.

The power struggle was not, however, merely a simple competition for power among ambitious men—ambitious though they certainly were. The divisions among the Party leadership were usually based on significant differences over political and economic issues. Indeed, the two became so intertwined in the disputes of the era as to be almost inseparable.

Central to the disputes was the question of the direction of the economy. NEP had worked to pull the country out of its economic disaster. Its success, however, was based primarily on putting existing productive capacity and skill back to work. Moreover, it rested far too heavily on private economic activity for the liking of a political leadership committed to socialism. All leaders agreed that sooner or later the Party must resume a march toward socialism and toward greater state direction of the economy. Moreover, many felt that the pace of economic development was too slow and had to be forced through state intervention and direction. Looming over all of these discussions was the dilemma of how to get new economic growth, especially in industry, once the economy completed the process of recovery—which it did in 1925-1926. Thus the Party leaders fought in part over economic policy.

Two broad approaches emerged. One, called sometimes the “super-industrializers,” advocated a commitment to rapid industrial development. This would be paid for by heavy taxes on the peasants and other “private” producers. The leading theoretician of this school was Evgenii Preobrazhensky, who was himself a leading Party figure. The most prominent political exponent of this, however, was Trotsky. This approach was roundly criticized by many Party leaders as a reckless gamble or, at least, as premature. They defended NEP as the proper course at this time. The leadership in formulating the response to Preobrazhensky and the defense of NEP fell to Nikolai Bukharin. This position was taken up by the Triumvirate in their struggle against Trotsky. The economic issues were complex and interwoven with other issues, including a debate over growing bureaucratization in the Party and complaints about the suppression of inner-party democracy. Therefore both economic and political issues are to be found intertwined in many documents directly focused on economic issues as well as in documents which on the surface seem to be primarily political or about the power struggle.

The year 1923-1924 witnessed the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The Union took basic form in 1923 and was finalized by the

ratification of a new constitution in January 1924. This allowed a certain rationalization of the administrative practices which had evolved during a period when the various republics were nominally independent but, in practice, ruled from Moscow. The system chosen, a federal republic, had consequences much more far reaching than anyone at the time could have foreseen. To deal with the many nationalities the new state was organized on federal and nationality lines, including extensive rights of local authority and even the right of secession by the larger constituent republics. These were assumed at the time to be rights with more symbolic than substantive meaning, with pro-forma local republic rights more than counterbalanced by tight central control via the Communist Party. The theoretical rights, however, proved to have more substance and lasting power than any Party leader in 1923-1924 would have thought possible, as events of the 1990s would show.

The period saw the continued flourishing of the arts and discussion of various visions of the new society and schemes for achieving them. Indeed, the renewed flourishing of popular culture as prosperity returned and the visibility of a new class of private entrepreneurs as consumers forced a rethinking of cultural and social premises of the new society. Trotsky especially devoted significant time and energy to these issues in early 1923, before the power struggle began in earnest. Although the Party still refused to anoint one or another of the literary and artistic groups which clamored for backing for their position, it did increasingly intervene to assert the Party's ultimate authority.

The USSR was very active internationally during these years, but with mixed results. On the one hand the Soviet Union obtained formal diplomatic recognition from the major European powers in 1924, finally entering the community of nations diplomatically. On the other, however, general hostility toward the Soviet state and reaction against the activities and propaganda of the Communist International kept those relations tense. Similarly, several important treaties were signed with the states bordering on the USSR, but relations with these generally remained difficult as well. Although the Soviet leaders continued to talk of the world revolution, expectations for that in the near future dwindled during this period. Indeed, that also became an issue in the power struggle, as Stalin formulated his thesis of "socialism in one country" while successfully attacking Trotsky's emphasis upon the importance of the spread of revolution to the survival of the Soviet Union.

The nature of the new Soviet system was still in flux during these years. The power struggle, the economic debates, the seeming vitality of NEP era culture, and the as yet uncertain course of the Soviet Union internationally—all these questions were still open, still to be decided. If there were powerful pressures of past practices, beliefs and behavior pushing toward certain outcomes, and if certain broad directions seemed fixed (the single-party power of the Communist Party, for example), much was still undetermined about the political, economic, and cultural forms of the new state.

# 1 THE YEAR 1923

## THE THEATRICAL SITUATION IN SOVIET RUSSIA —AN ASSESSMENT BY LUNACHARSKY

1923

*This assessment of the theatrical situation by A. V. Lunacharsky was in response to questions posed to him by the Huntly Carter. Carter was studying the "new theater" in Soviet Russia. Lunacharsky, who more than any other person was responsible for theaters (and other cultural institutions) in Russia, gave a short overview of the nature and condition of the theater by 1923. Some of the responses in section two reflect Carter's interest in two questions: to what extent could theater be separated from monetary—box office—concerns, and what in the "new" Soviet theater could be exported to Great Britain?*

### *The Theatrical Situation in Soviet Russia in 1923*

Communicated to the Author by A. Lunacharsky

People's Commissariat for Education

The theater system at the present time in Russia is as follows:—

The former imperial theaters in Moscow and Petrograd, and also the Moscow Art Theater, a very interesting advanced theater (the "Chamber" [Kamerny] Theater), the Jewish Central Theater, and a few dramatic studios, are considered purely State theaters. They receive a considerable State subsidy, in consideration of which they place 15 per cent of all seats in every part of the theater at the disposal of the workers at extremely reduced rates.

All theatrical property generally, with the exception of that belonging to individual actors, has been nationalized, and is under the control of the Soviets of those provinces in which the theaters stand. Some Soviets run the theaters themselves, others lease them. At all events, the theaters are under the constant observation of the chief of the departments of popular education.

The theaters pursue various ends, principally cultural. The State theaters bear the title of "Academic," and attempt first and foremost to be a model in the artistic sense. Their repertoire has changed very little, as it was always of a very high standard. The inclusion of revolutionary plays in the repertoire is almost impracticable, in consequence of the absence of completely artistic plays of that type. However, the Academic Theater in Petrograd (the former Alexandrinsky) has staged Lunacharsky's play, "Faust and the City," while the Moscow Academic Small Theater has staged "Oliver Cromwell," also by Lunacharsky.

The other theaters fall quite definitely under three distinct heads. The majority have lately been pursuing the aim only of amusement. It must be stated, however, that a fairly strict control over them keeps these theaters at a much higher level than their counterpart in Western Europe and America, as was noted incidentally in his last writings by Mr. Emile Vandervelde [a Belgian socialist—R.W.], who is not exactly a sympathizer with Soviet Russia.

A second group, much smaller, is constituted by those theaters which are privately owned, but attempt to carry out purely cultural work. There is a fair number of such theaters in Moscow and Petrograd, and they are also to be found in the provinces. They show

considerable vitality, and have staged many revolutionary plays of an artistic-agitational type. Amongst them may be mentioned the Petrograd Popular Theater, the Petrograd Large Dramatic Theater, the Moscow Comedy Theater (formerly Korsh), the "Actors' Theater," under the management of the well-known Meierhold, the "Karl Marx" Theater at Saratov, and, properly speaking, outside the boundaries of Soviet Russia, the extremely interesting popular theater at Tiflis.

The third group is constituted by the agitational theaters. Under this heading fall the theaters of the so-called "Proletcult" (the Workers' Cultural League), and the theater of Revolutionary Satire in Moscow, controlled by the Moscow Soviet.

## II

A. It would be impossible to indicate exact prices in Soviet rubles, as prices change owing to the constant fall in the value of the rouble. At all events, one can say definitely that the price is not more than half of what was paid before the Revolution. This rule applies both to the dear and to the free seats.

B. The following are plays of proletarian spirit which might be recommended for Britain: Mayakovsky, "Mysteria bouffes"; Kamensky, "The Locomotives' Mass"; the agitational plays of Reisner; amongst my plays, "The Chancellor and the Locksmith" is being translated into English by Comrade Vengerova, and "Oliver Cromwell" by Madame Kropotkina.

C. There are two children's theaters in Moscow owned by the State and the Moscow Soviet. There are also two or three such theaters in the provinces.

D. On the subject of purely proletarian theaters, I should point out that quite recently the Proletcult had an enormous number of studios and two theaters in Russia (Moscow and Petrograd), and also one theater each in Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. At the present moment a considerable number of the studios have closed, as well as the Petrograd proletarian theater; while the Proletcult generally, which had up to half a million members, is having to reduce its activities in consequence of the cessation of those large subsidies from the State which were made in the first years of the Revolution, but which have become impossible with the New Economic Policy.

In the proletarian theaters, as far as I know, the following plays were given: "The Mexican," an adaptation of Jack London; "The Lena," a play by Pletnev; "Hunger," by Andreiev; "The Avengers," an adaptation from Claudel; my play, "Vassilissa the Wise" (in the proletarian theater at Tiflis), and some others.

E. Cinematograph production was cramped throughout by the absence of films, and has only recently begun to develop again.

F. An extremely vivid illustration of what the new theater is like has been the organization of certain mass performances in the open air. There were some in Moscow, but mostly in Petrograd. Amongst them the most notable was "The Taking of the Winter Palace," played at the Winter Palace itself last year, and a political fantastical drama, performed on the islands at Petrograd.

## III

General education in Russia takes the form of the unitary labor school, which, of course, as yet cannot take in all the children. It covers up to 60 per cent, in its first four (elementary) classes, and not more than 10 percent of all the children in the upper (secondary) classes.

Work amongst adults is carried on by the so-called Chief Political Education Department, and at first had extremely far-reaching plans. It was proposed in the course of ten years completely to eradicate illiteracy. The prolonged crisis and the famine have necessarily lengthened this period.

Art is very widely utilized for propaganda purposes. We created a great series of placards, and also utilized the cinematograph (our famous agitation trains), and the theater. Our

agitation dramatic groups travelled all over Russia and reached the depths of Siberia. Of late this work has also been held up by the lack of resources, but we shall return to it with the revival of our industry.

Huntley Carter: 261-63.



## CLUB AND FACTORY THEATERS

1923

*One of the features of the era of revolutionary enthusiasm was the development of theaters at factories, workers' clubs, and elsewhere. These were to imbue the viewers with proper revolutionary ideology and to contribute to creating a true proletarian culture (although there was little agreement on just what that meant). This account by Huntly Carter describes these theaters as they developed between 1917 and the time he finished his book in 1923, and is based primarily on his own observations as a person interested in tracing what he saw as the development of a new theater in Soviet Russia. At this stage they reflected the enthusiasm and spontaneity of the early revolutionary years, and the belief that the revolution was a fundamental cultural revolution as much or more than a political or economic one. Club and factory based theaters remained a feature of Soviet cultural and political life long after they were brought under tighter control of the party authorities.*

Huntley Carter

### *The Club and Factory Theaters*

All over Russia little co-operative groups of men, women and children are making theaters for their own use. These are the smaller organizations which have arisen from the private initiative of communists, workers, peasants, soldiers, and students without official aid. Their number is amazing. There are thousands in Moscow, Petrograd, and the cities, towns and villages throughout Russia. A glance at the pages of the Proletcult Bulletin for 1918, 1919, 1920 reveals column after column of notes on the theatrical work of countless working-class organizations scattered in all parts of vast Russia. The majority of these groups have formed theaters in clubs, rooms, cellars, in fact, every available place. Besides these there are a number of theaters established in factories. Hardly a factory but has its theater, dramatic club, or circle.

These theaters, barn, room, cellar, club, and factory, are largely the outcome of the 1917 Revolution, and a great many owe their existence to the proletcult movement. Many belong to the proletcult organization, and many more are influenced by its ideas. I say they are largely the outcome of the 1917 Revolution because the club theater movement actually began in 1905 about the time of the first Revolution with about 5,000 workers' dramatic circles. This was the result of the Revolution on the workers. The movement was subsequently suppressed by the Imperial Government, but re-appeared with the 1917 Revolution, and has had a highly successful career ever since. Factory theaters are of a more recent origin.

Speaking of the Moscow Workers' Clubs, "Russian Information" (an official Russian journal), says:

"The workers' clubs of Moscow are under the general direction of the Moscow Provincial Department for Political Education, and the town is divided into seven districts, the

clubs of each of which are directed by a district department for political education. In each district there is a theater at which companies of professional actors perform. The tickets for the performances at these theaters are distributed among the factories, workers' committees of which again allot the tickets to individual workers. Each of the districts is divided into five areas; each area possesses a workers' club, and in addition to these, almost every large factory or works has its own club.

"The enthusiasm of the Russian workers for the theater during the years of the Revolution is now well-known. As a rule, every club has its theater with its company of amateur actors, mostly consisting of the younger men and women. The passion for the theater never seems to wane either amongst the older workers or the young, amongst the actors or the audiences. In addition, every club has its choir, and often its own orchestra, which give frequent performances for the members."

Generally speaking, all these small organizations conceive of the theater as an instrument of self-expression. It is a place wherein the new working class population can, in their leisure moments, play at destroying the old Tsarist Russia and building up a new Russia more after their own likeness. The organization and work are mainly on voluntary and co-operative lines. Workers, peasants, and others come together, form a dramatic group, and together they support their particular theater while co-operating in its work. The plays are mostly improvised, and many of the performances have a spontaneous co-operative character.

There are different methods of improvisation. Here is an example of one in which a group of workers took a picture and tried to "produce" it. The picture was hanging on the wall of the club room. Someone suggested they should take its subject, a woman and man holding a barricade, and dramatize it. They proceeded to analyze the picture. They inquired why the woman was at the barricade. This led to a discussion of the social relations of man and woman, the questions of labor, and the many questions arising therefrom. When they had fully analyzed it, unfolded it, as it were, they arrived at the material for a play. First they produced the play without words. Then words were introduced. Thus collectively they built up the play, altering it here and there as they did so, till finally they gave it a fixed form. By this time it had ceased to resemble the picture. This play is called, "Don't Go." It has passed into the proletcult repertory.

Another method was followed in the case of the adaptation of "The Mexican," a story by Jack London. The story is that of a young revolutionary, who discovers that there is no gold left in the party coffers. He thinks that the coming Revolution is in danger. He happens to read in the newspapers that a boxing match is being arranged, the winner of which is to receive 500 dollars. He determines to win, and does. With the funds so obtained he starts the Revolution. A 500 dollar revolution does not sound a big affair. The play was made in the improvised way from the story. The latter was read to the assembled company, and the acted parts and the divisions of the scenes were decided by them, while other important details were also determined. The result was highly successful. When the production took place many of the scenes actually united the stage and auditorium.

In all the proletcult mass productions, with some of which I shall deal in the next chapter, much emphasis is laid on improvisation and, of course, co-operation. A good deal is left to the actor. In this, no doubt, some of the influence of the *Commedia dell' arte* can be traced. The Italian comedians were given bare scenarios to be filled in as the performance proceeded. As we have seen, Meierhold opened a studio for the study of *Commedia dell' arte* ideas and methods.

The production of revolutionary episodes is as follows. The stage-manager relates to the dramatic circle the history of the movement to which the episodes belong, then selects an interesting episode, and describes striking individual figures. Soon the circle is penetrated by the atmosphere of the time, and receives exact ideas concerning the social causes of this

or that movement springing from the main one. Then the circle proceeds to produce a definite episode, using improvisation for the purpose. Here there is a difference from traditional form of improvisation. Instead of the actors being left entirely to themselves, the stage-manager intervenes. He keeps the individual actors together, and directs the improvisation by indicating the path to be taken when any one leaves the right one. The most valuable portions of the scheme of the work usually belong to the actors, with the result that the play is a new one.

A good many examples of cellar and club improvised and co-operative performances could be given, but two or three must suffice. Political and revolutionary satire used to be very popular. To-day it is giving place to a gayer species of play. There are, however, many little theaters that exhibit political satire. A very good and biting example was performed not long ago in a cellar theater. It was called "The Mangy Dog." It was a typical spontaneous co-operative performance. A great deal of the action took place in the auditorium with the aid of the audience. One saw, first of all, a sort of committee of "fat men" engaged in the purchase of human beings for cannon fodder. Military officers wearing illuminated death's heads appeared one after the other and ordered armies of workers. As soon as an order was given, the Flesh Kings sent their servants among the spectators, from whom they selected a favorable specimen of a magnificent young proletarian to be supplied to the army. He was hauled on the stage, nearly stripped, and made to go through a sort of war-time medical examination, of muscles, teeth, general fitness, etc. Then the Flesh Kings and Generals struck a bargain for the supply of masses of men according to sample. An indignant revolutionary poet rushed on the stage, but finding he could do nothing, committed suicide, and was thrown back among the spectators. Next came a creature in a coat of many colors, who so pleased the Big Business Flesh Kings that they paid him a handsome sum in advance. The traders in human flesh were succeeded by a super-sweater got up in a gaudy dress, jewels and feathers. Having inspected the spectators through an opera glass, she selected an attractive young woman, who was hauled on to the stage, uttering piercing cries. The procuress, or whatever she was, simply tucked the victim under her arm and marched off with her. The conclusion was a tableau. The electric light was turned off, there was a peal of thunder, and the blood-red Soviet star rose above tall factory chimneys. In the light of lurid flames the ruins of the Stock Exchange were seen. The audience consisted of a mixture of soldiers and sailors.

Here is a characteristic example of another kind of improvised and co-operative performance.

A small, low, stuffy room. There is a rudimentary stage at one end, but no footlights, or prompter. A part of the auditorium is divided by a grey curtain, and the gangway on either side is hung with a grey curtain. Directly in front of the audience is a grey screen representing a wall. This is the stage, auditorium, and scene. The room is full. The stage in semi-darkness. There is intense silence. Everybody is waiting, deeply attentive. Slowly there comes the murmur of distant voices drawing near—voices of men, women, and children. Then directly through the auditorium a troop of hungry women move wearily toward the stage. Children follow. Then men appear. They move slowly, bent, and a low cry accompanies their movement. Turning neither to the right nor left, they move toward the grey wall. They are a group of men who, if bowed, are still firm and unbroken. The women crawl upon their knees with the cry, "Bread! Give me bread!" They bear babes at their starved breasts. They stretch out their white shrunken hands. They implore pity. The men utter gloomy complaints. The first rank reaches the wall. There is dead silence.

A voice begins to pray. "Great God, thou seest the sufferings of the people. Seest thou that their power is at an end?" Other voices join in, and all the men kneel to the unseen God behind the grey wall. The prayer dies away. Its last sounds merge in those of a waltz from behind the wall. It becomes dark. A brightly lighted window appears in the wall



through which dancing couples are seen. Magnificently dressed forms of men and women flit by. Some of the kneeling men raise their heads. Before their eyes, beyond the window, move these gorgeously appparelled couples. Amongst the crowd of dancers, lackeys move, serving out choice food and drink. The kneeling workers hear how the idle class jeer at their wan faces and ragged clothes. The men begin to complain gloomily. The bourgeoisie overhear and are afraid. But someone calms them, saying: "These workers are stupid and cowardly. They are not organized, and would not venture to attack Capital—the belief in the godly origin of the wall is strong in them."

The complaints of the men grow menacing. They rise and move slowly forward. But it becomes dark again, and before them stands the firm wall veiled by the Unknown.

An agitator urges the men to move in a body and destroy the legendary wall. The men are willing to obey, but the demented women strive to hold them back from the struggle. But a group of courageous men throw themselves upon the wall. The scene changes to a luxuriously furnished room. There is a meeting of the head council of the world bourgeoisie they consider the situation and decide how to meet it. The unrest of the workers must be met by force. The men are about to throw themselves upon the enemy, but the wall interposes. They retreat. The more courageous advance again. Soldiers. A struggle. The women waver. But the men's leaders press forward. The wall is destroyed. The sun rises in splendor. Upon a hill appears a stalwart worker, hammer in hand. The notes of the International burst forth. They are taken up by all present. The sun illuminates the scene as with a glow of victory. Curtain.

On the eve of last May Day, Russia's great festival day, I visited some Moscow clubs, where I witnessed a variety of performances by the workers, soldiers, sailors and peasants. These clubs were trade union ones, and they represented different shades of political and socialist thought. One, an extreme Communist club, was more exclusive than others, and only admitted members, their wives and families. Admittance was by ticket obtained from the T.U. Generally speaking, the workers' club performances are open free to the members of the club and their friends, as well as to other workers who are not members. And anyone who likes can participate in a performance. The trade unions have their own club performances. Everything is on a co-operative basis. The players are unpaid. They are working men and women engaged in regular employment. They improvise the plays, act them, and make the costumes, scenery and properties. At all the performances children from a large proportion of the audience. They push their way through to the front seats, and stand four and five deep in front of the stage. They are eager, enthusiastic spectators, and follow every word and movement with the closest attention. On the whole, they reveal a capacity to concentrate on what is actually taking place that would shame many an adult spectator in England.

I began my evening with the performance at a Railway Men's Club. The piece was called "Once in an Evening." The story dealt with the rather hackneyed theme of a man who wants to start a Revolution and has an obstacle to overcome. In this instance it is a prison where he is spending an enforced holiday. A woman comrade is working to set him free. The Governor of the prison, who knows all about the revolutionary plot, agrees to release the man if she will consent to be his mistress. But no sooner has the agreement been made than the woman learns that the Revolution has taken place. In the end the prison is set on fire, the bold bad general is roasted alive amid communistic cheers, and everything comes communistically right according to plan. The moral is that revolution will out in spite of bureaucracy. I next went to the club of a central trade unions group. The play was the "Passer-by." It told us all about a peasant girl who loved a sprig of the old nobility with bad blood in him. A passer-by tells her about a new and wonderful land where there are no masters or servants or wage problems or deputies like politicians. All are equal and enjoy the fruit of their labor. It is the Workers' Paradise. The girl wants to go there, but she cannot leave her lover behind. The lover does not want to go because he cannot take his

rich mother and her considerable belongings with him. Here is a pretty fix. To solve the matter, the lover conveniently dies suddenly. The First of May motive was ingeniously introduced. The peasant girl meets workers going to work. She reminds them that it is the great festival day. They must not work, neither must their fellow-workers. All are to observe it as The Day. There is a good deal of symbolism about these May Day plays. But the whole thing is simply propaganda.

At 11.30 I arrived at a trade union memorial club. It was established to commemorate the memory of one, Gorohov, who was killed while fighting with Marmontov's company on November 7th. The performance and the room decorations and inscriptions were clearly designed to usher in May Day, just as a certain church service is designed to usher in New Year's Day in England. Indeed one could trace a good deal of Communist faith. May 1st is Labor's New Year's Day; January 1st is Christianity's New Year's Day. The club room, which was crowded to suffocation, was festooned with evergreens, draped with red and hung with portraits of Lenin, Trotsky, and Marx, and with inscriptions. Some of the inscriptions ran, "We shall not surrender big industries to the sharks of the people," "We the Youth of soviet Russia send our love to the young fighters of the whole world." Then there were the watchwords of Lenin, "Clamp the peasant and the worker," "Make the whole world one." [By "clamp" Carter means bring together in a firm bond—R.W.]

The exhibition was an improvised revue designed to emphasize the importance of May Day and its implications. One might call it a family affair in honor of the October Communist Revolution. The scene contained a large clock, which faced the audience. Its hands pointed to midnight, and it bore the words, "1st May, all on the streets."

The curtain rose at five minutes to twelve on a group of the old order, soldiers, priests, etc. These scampered off as the clock struck twelve. A peasant descended in a basket from an aeroplane with a lot of presents, including a piece of red, which symbolized the Revolution. He asked all present to celebrate The Day. They showed their readiness by standing up in memory of the fallen fighters in the Revolution. Next entered a character with a big bottle full of tears supposed to have been shed by Big Business and Bourgeoisie who have lost their trade and property. Then a quantity of paper was unfolded, revealing a little ball. This represented the large promises and the infinitesimal conscience of the Entente. Following this came a large galosh with the Entente and social democrats seated in it after the fashion of the family that lived in a shoe. From this one gathered that the Entente and Socialists were in a scrape while the Communists were out of it. And then came portentous volumes and miles of red-tape. No one was required to tell us that this was a nasty smack at bureaucracy, which requires endless means to attain a small object. The symbolism continued to unroll in this fashion. Then came demonstrations and processions of workers and peasants' children, augmented by those in the audience. There were speeches by soldiers, sailors, and workers and by representatives of England, Germany, America, and Italy. Finally there were shots and a crash, individualistic inscriptions were torn down, revealing communistic ones. There followed transformation effects, including the union of workers of the world. Finally came the singing of the "Internationale" in which all joined as usual. After which, at two in the morning, I tramped two miles studying the street illuminations, which announced that May Day had begun. A few hours later I saw a theatrical demonstration on a vast scale. It was the parade of troops and workers' demonstration in the Red Square. There is a further reference to it in the chapter on street pageantry.

From time to time I saw many of these little theaters at work. I found them all alike, instructive, and demanding energy and endurance on the part of the spectator. I remember on one occasion going to the Soldiers' Club theater in the Red Square. The performance began soon after seven o'clock. Three plays adapted from stories by Gorky were given after which, at three o'clock in the morning, there was a dance. This theater, by the way, has a scenic studio, where all the scenery is designed by soldiers. In the workroom I saw scene models far in advance of anything the English stage has to show.

The factory theaters are no less active and enterprising. In Petrograd there are twenty-three factory theaters under the direction of the art department of the Gubpolitprosvet. They work also under the observance of the organizing committee of the factory theaters. There are, in addition, 160 clubs with worker-actor, dramatic, musical, and other circles.

The repertory of the factory theater is approved by a Bureau which consists of an organizing committee managing the art department and the representatives of the biggest factory theaters. The repertory is made up of classical plays and plays of the workers' theaters. Among the classics are pieces by Ostrovsky, Leo Tolstoy, Dostoevski, Shakespeare, Goldoni, Synge ("The Hero"), Toler, and Upton Sinclair. The club art and production circles work as one circle, their aim being to emphasize the dates of the Red Calendar (October Revolution, 9th January, International Day, and so on.) Scenery is designed and elaborated by a section known as the Independent Theater, or by the circle itself.

The club circles work not only separately, but sometimes together when districts unite for collective representations, especially summer open-air performances. They also go to the villages in summer-time to act before and with the peasants. Special plays dealing with country life are prepared for the purpose. A special center called the Independent Theater has been organized for the purpose of uniting the activities of the factory and club theaters, to collect and summarize dramatic material, to elaborate methods and to provide instructors for promoting the general work. The system of providing instructors for workers' theaters is not altogether a good one. Some of the instructors are drawn from the academic theaters, and bring their methods with them. For instance, I once saw an instructor from the Moscow Art Theater trying to rehearse actor-workers according to that theater's naturalistic method, for which they were quite unsuited and had no inclination.

The aforementioned Independent Theater section of the factory and club theaters has a central workers' studio group devoted to agitational work, samples of which are represented by the members at the club and factory theaters.

Finally, mention should be made of peasant theatrical activities. In Kostroma alone there are 600 village dramatic circles. In the Nizhni-Novgorod district there about 900. It is believed that this indicates that the peasants are working out a theater and a dramatic form of their own. Probably they would be based on religious mysticism, whereas the workers are chiefly concerned with mechanical thought and action.

Huntly Carter: 94-103.



### ADMINISTRATIVE EXILE

3 January 1923

*Exile was one of the common forms of punishment in Imperial Russia and the practice continued in Soviet Russia and the Soviet Union. These instructions implemented a government decree of 10 August 1922 formally authorizing administrative exile for up to three years. The State Political Administration, a political police, is perhaps best known by its Russian initials, the GPU.*

#### ORDER OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Instructions for the application of the decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee concerning administrative exile.

Art. 1. Administrative exile is applied to persons whose presence in a certain place (including places within the confines of the R.S.F.S.R. appears, from their activity, their past, their connection with criminal circles, dangerous from the point of view of safeguarding the revolutionary order.

Art. 2. Administrative exiles may be of three different kinds:

- a) Exile from a given locality, accompanied by a ban on the right of residence in certain specified places of the R.S.F.S.R.
- b) Exile from a given locality to a definite region of the R.S.F.S.R.
- c) Exile outside the confines of the R.S.F.S.R., i.e., abroad.

Art. 3. The local organs of the State Political Administration, not below the rank of the provincial departments, have the right to recommend the application of administrative exile of all categories, to the Special Commission, through the State Political Administration and the Administrative-Organization Division of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, with the knowledge and consent of the Presidium of their Executive Committees, according to clause "a" of Article 2 of the present instructions.

Art. 4. The case of each person recommended for exile must include the following data:

- a) Name, patronymic, family name.
- b) Age.
- c) Class origin.
- d) Occupation at present and before the revolution.
- e) Family relations.
- f) Exact reasons for the exile, with a detailed statement of the necessity for the application.

Art. 5. A recommendation of exile, received through the proper reporter, is to be presented for the consideration of the Special Commission, with the conclusions in the case, of the State Political Administration or the Administrative-Organization Division of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs.

Art. 6. Extracts from the protocols of the Special Commission are to be sent to the State Political Administration and the Administrative-Organizational Division of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, for execution.

Art. 7. The exile, upon arrival at the destination, is registered with the local organ of the State Political Administration which fixes the place of residence according to the corresponding instructions.

Art. 8. All the exiles in a certain region are to be accounted for and put under the surveillance of the corresponding organs of the State Political Administration, subject to a weekly registration.

Art. 9. The case of the exile, i.e., including all that is specified in Article 4, as well as all the personal documents taken away from the exile, and the extract from the protocol of the Special Commission, is to be forwarded to the organ of the State Political Administration at the place of exile.

Art. 10. Upon arrival at the point of destination, the exile is given by the local organ of the State Political Administration an identity card indicating whence and where exiled, and the length of the term.

Note: In the case of clause "a" of Article 2, of the present instructions, the exile is deprived of all documents in return for which a certificate with a photograph is issued, indicating whence exiled and for what period, which will serve in place of a passport.

Art. 11. Upon arrival at the point of destination, the exile is to be registered by the department for the distribution of labor, without discrimination.

Art. 12. Exiling is carried out by *etape* [system of movement by stages from prison to prison in route to the prison to final destination—Ed.]. All the existing regulations in this regard apply to the exile.

Note: When exiled from a given place without specifying any destination, (as provided in clause "a," Article 2) the exile is conveyed by *etape*, to the boundary of the region from which the exile is ordered.

Art. 13. In the case of the exile wishing to proceed to the point of destination at his or her own expense, it is necessary to procure permission from the corresponding provincial department or political organ, depending which had initiated the case.

Art. 14. The families of the exiles may proceed to the points of destination by railroad or other means of travel on the same basis as other travellers.

Art. 15. The exile, on filing a proper application, may be granted a period not exceeding two weeks for the settlement of private affairs.

Art. 16. The administrative exiles may file application, not before the expiration of the first half of their terms, for their return home without completing their sentence, which application, accompanied by the recommendation of the State Political Administration, is to be forwarded for the consideration of the Special Commission.

Art. 17. Exiles will be prosecuted for escape, on the basis of Art. 95 of the Criminal Code, in the following cases:

a) For not arriving at the point of departure for exile at the appointed time, when proceeding without convoy, without a good excuse certified to by the organs of the State Political Administration.

b) For not arriving at the point of destination.

c) for leaving the place of exile without the knowledge or permission of the local organ of the State Political Administration for a period of three days from the time of discovery.

d) For wilful return of the exile to the points from which he or she has been banned.

Art. 18. The wilful return to the Republic of a person exiled abroad is punished by law, according to Article 71 of the criminal code.

Art. 19. The State Political Administration and the Administrative-Organizational Division of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs respectively conduct the accounting, registration and execution of the orders of the Special Commission, for which purpose corresponding instructions, supplementing these instructions, are to be issued to the subordinate organs.

Art. 20. Eventualities not covered by these instructions, will be provided for by the Special Commission.

*(Signed)* F. DZERZHINSKY,

*The People's Commissar for Internal Affairs*

*and the President of the State Political Administration*

*Letters from Russian Prisons: 299-330, with modifications.*



LENIN, "BETTER FEWER, BUT BETTER."

2 March 1923

*Between Lenin's second stroke on 16 December 1922 and his third on 9 March 1923, he devoted a great deal of attention to the condition of the Communist Party and the Soviet government (see the documents at the end of the previous volume of Documents of Soviet History). This is the last major article Lenin wrote, and it is devoted to how to solve the organizational and administrative problems of the party and state in whose creation he had played the major role. In January he had written a small article on the role that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should play in solving the problems of state administration. Here he picked up that theme and enlarged on it as a way of discussing the problems of developing the proper governmental apparatus. See also the restructuring of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate, 12 November 1923, below. The three stars (\*\*\*) which separate sections are as in the original and do not signify omissions.*

V. I. Lenin

*Better Fewer, But Better*

In the matter of improving our state apparatus, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should not, in my opinion, either strive after quantity or hurry. We have so far been able to devote so little thought and attention to the efficiency of our state apparatus that it would now be quite legitimate if we took special care to secure its thorough organization, and concentrated in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a staff of workers really abreast of the times, i.e., not inferior to the best West-European standards. For a socialist republic this condition is, of course, too modest. But our experience of the first five years has fairly crammed our heads with mistrust and skepticism. These qualities assert themselves involuntarily when, for example, we hear people dilating at too great length and too flippantly on "proletarian" culture. For a start, we should be satisfied with real bourgeois culture; for a start, we should be glad to dispense with the cruder types of pre-bourgeois culture, i.e., bureaucratic culture or serf culture, etc. In matters of culture, haste and sweeping measures are most harmful. Many of our young writers and Communists should get this well into their heads.

Thus, in the matter of our state apparatus we should now draw the conclusion from our past experience that it would be better to proceed more slowly.

Our state apparatus is so deplorable, not to say wretched, that we must first think very carefully how to combat its defects, bearing in mind that these defects are rooted in the past, which, although it has been overthrown, has not yet been overcome, has not yet reached the stage of a culture that has receded into the distant past. I say culture deliberately, because in these matters we can only regard as achieved what has become part and parcel of our culture, of our social life, our habits. We might say that the good in our social system has not been properly studied, understood, and taken to heart; it has been hastily grasped at; it has not been verified or tested, corroborated by experience, and not made durable, etc. Of course, it could not be otherwise in a revolutionary epoch, when development proceeded at such breakneck speed that in a matter of five years we passed from tsarism to the Soviet system.

It is time we did something about it. We must show sound skepticism for too rapid progress, for boastfulness, etc. We must give thought to testing the steps forward we proclaim every hour, take every minute and then prove every second that they are flimsy, superficial and misunderstood. The most harmful thing here would be haste. The most harmful thing would be to rely on the assumption that we know at least something, or that we have any considerable number of elements necessary for the building of a really new state apparatus, one really worthy to be called socialist, Soviet, etc.

No, we are ridiculously deficient of such an apparatus, and even of the elements of it, and we must remember that we should not stint time on building it, and that it will take many, many years.

What elements have we for building this apparatus? Only two. First, the workers who are absorbed in the struggle for socialism. The elements are not sufficiently educated. They would like to build a better apparatus for us, but they do not know how. They cannot build one. They have not yet developed the culture required for this; and it is culture that is required. Nothing will be achieved in this by doing things in a rush, by assault, by vim or vigor, or in general, by any of the best human qualities. Secondly, we have elements of knowledge, education and training, but they are ridiculously inadequate compared with all other countries.

Here we must not forget that we are too prone to compensate (or imagine that we can compensate) our lack of knowledge by zeal, haste, etc.

In order to renovate our state apparatus we must at all costs set, first, to learn, secondly, to learn, and thirdly to learn, and then see it to that learning shall not remain a dead letter, or a fashionable catch-phrase (and we should admit in all frankness that this happens

very often with us), that learning shall really become part of our very being, that it shall actually and fully become a constituent element of our social life. In short, we must not make the demands that are made by bourgeois Western Europe, but demands that are fit and proper for a country which has set out to develop into a socialist country.

The conclusions to be drawn from the above are the following: we must make the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a really exemplary institution, an instrument to improve our state apparatus.

In order that it may attain the desired high level, we must follow the rule: "Measure your cloth seven times before you cut."

For this purpose, we must utilize the very best of what there is in our social system, and utilize it with the greatest caution, thoughtfulness and knowledge, to build up the new People's Commissariat.

For this purpose, the best elements that we have in our social system—such as, first, the advanced workers, and, second, the really enlightened elements for whom we can vouch that they will not take the word for the deed, and will not utter a single word that goes against their conscience—should not shrink from admitting any difficulty and should not shrink from any struggle in order to achieve the object they have seriously set themselves.

We have been bustling for five years trying to improve our state apparatus, but it has been mere bustle, which has proved useless in these five years, or even futile, or even harmful. This bustle created the impression that we were doing something, but in effect it was only clogging up our institutions and our brains.

It is high time things were changed.

We must follow the rule: Better fewer, but better. We must follow the rule: Better get good human material in two or even three years than work in haste without hope of getting any at all.

I know that it will be hard to keep to this rule and apply it under our conditions. I know that the opposite rule will force its way through a thousand loopholes. I know that enormous resistance will have to be put up, that devilish persistence will be required, that in the first few years at least work in this field will be hellishly hard. Nevertheless, I am convinced that only by such effort shall we be able to achieve our aim; and that only by achieving this aim shall we create a republic that is really worthy of the name of Soviet, socialist, and so on, and so forth.

Many readers probably thought that the figures I quoted by way of illustration in my first article [on the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, in January 1923—R.W.] were too small. I am sure that many calculations may be made to prove that they are. But I think that we must put one thing above all such and other calculations, i.e., our desire to obtain really exemplary quality.

I think that the time has at last come when we must work in real earnest to improve our state apparatus and in this there can scarcely be anything more harmful than haste. That is why I would sound a strong warning against inflating the figures. In my opinion, we should, on the contrary, be especially sparing with figures in this matter. Let us say frankly that the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection does not at present enjoy the lightest authority. Everybody knows that no other institutions are worse organized than those of our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and that under present conditions nothing can be expected from this People's Commissariat. We must have this firmly fixed in our minds if we really want to create within a few years an institution that will, first, be an exemplary institution, secondly, win everybody's absolute confidence, and, thirdly, prove to all and sundry that we have really justified the work of such a highly placed institution as the Central Control Commission. In my opinion, we must immediately and irrevocably reject all general figures for the size of office staffs. We must select employees for the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with particular care and only on the basis of

the strictest test. Indeed, what is the use of establishing a People's Commissariat which carries on anyhow, which does not enjoy the slightest confidence, and whose word carries scarcely any weight? I think that our main object in launching the work of reconstruction that we now have in mind is to avoid all this.

The workers whom we are enlisting as members of the Central Control Commission must be irreproachable Communists, and I think that a great deal has yet to be done to teach them the methods and objects of their work. Furthermore, there must be a definite number of secretaries to assist in this work, who must be put to a triple test before they are appointed to their posts. Lastly, the officials whom in exceptional cases we shall accept directly as employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection must conform to the following requirements;

First, they must be recommended by several Communists.

Second, they must pass a test for knowledge of our state apparatus.

Third, they must pass a test in the fundamentals of the theory of our state apparatus, in the fundamentals of management, office routine, etc.

Fourth, they must work in such close harmony with the members of the Central Control Commission and with their own secretariat that we could vouch for the work of the whole apparatus.

I know that these requirements are extraordinarily strict, and I am very much afraid that the majority of the "practical" workers in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will say that these requirements are impracticable, or will scoff at them. But I ask any of the present chiefs of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or anyone associated with that body, whether they can honestly tell me the practical purpose of a People's Commissariat like the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. I think this question will help them recover their sense of proportion. Either it is not worth while having another of the numerous reorganizations that we have had of this hopeless affair, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or we must really set to work, by slow, difficult and unusual methods, and by testing these methods over and over again, to create something really exemplary, something that will win the respect of all and sundry for its merits, and not only because of its rank and title.

If we do not arm ourselves with patience, if we do not devote several years to this task, we had better not tackle it at all.

In my opinion we ought to select a minimum number of the higher labor research institutes, etc., which we have baked so hastily, see whether they are organized properly, and allow them to continue working, but only in a way that conforms to the high standards of modern science and gives us all its benefits. If we do that it will not be utopian to hope that within a few years we shall have an institution that will be able to perform its functions, to work systematically and steadily on improving our state apparatus, an institution backed by the trust of the working class, of the Russian Communist Party, and the whole population of our Republic.

The spade-work for this could be begun at once. If the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection accepted the present plan of reorganization, it could now take preparatory steps and work methodically until the task is completed, without haste, and not hesitating to alter what has already been done.

Any half-hearted solution would be extremely harmful in this matter. A measure for the size of the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection based on any other consideration would, in fact, be based on the old bureaucratic considerations, on old prejudices, on what has already been condemned, universally ridiculed, etc.

In substance, the matter is as follows:

Either we prove now that we have really learned something about state organization (we ought to have learned something in five years), or we prove that we are not sufficiently mature for it. If the latter is the case, we had better not tackle the task.



I think that with the available human material it will not be immodest to assume that we have learned enough to be able systematically to rebuild at least on People's Commissariat. True, this one People's Commissariat will have to be the model for our entire state apparatus.

We ought at once to announce a contest in the compilation of two or more textbooks on the organization of labor in general, and on management in particular. We can take as a basis the book already published by Yermansky, although it should be said in parentheses that he obviously sympathizes with Menshevism and is unfit to compile textbooks for the Soviet system. We can also take as a basis the recent book by Kerzhentsev, and some of the other partial textbooks available may be useful too.

We ought to send several qualified and conscientious people to Germany, or to Britain, to collect literature and to study this question. I mention Britain in case it is found impossible to send people to the U.S.A. or Canada.

We ought to appoint a commission to draw up the preliminary program of examinations for prospective employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection ditto for candidates to the Central Control Commission.

These and similar measures will not, of course, cause any difficulties for the People's Commissar or the collegium of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or for the Presidium of the Central Control Commission.

Simultaneously, a preparatory commission should be appointed to select candidates for membership of the Central Control Commission. I hope that we shall now be able to find more than enough candidates for this post among the experienced workers in all departments, as well as among the students of our Soviet higher schools. It would hardly be right to exclude one or another category beforehand. Probably preference will have to be given to a mixed composition for this institution, which should combine many qualities, and dissimilar merits. Consequently, the task of drawing up the list of candidates will entail a considerable amount of work. For example, it would be least desirable for the staff of the new People's Commissariat to consist of people of one type, only of officials, say, or for it to exclude people of the propagandist type, or people whose principal quality is sociability or the ability to penetrate into circles that are not altogether customary for officials in this field, etc.

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I think I shall be able to express my idea best if I compare my plan with that of academic institutions. Under the guidance of their Presidium, the members of the Central Control Commission should systematically examine all the papers and documents of the Political Bureau. Moreover, they should divide their time correctly between various jobs in investigating the routine in our institutions, from the very small and privately-owned offices to the highest state institutions. And lastly, their functions should include the study of theory, i.e., the theory of organization of the work they intend to devote themselves to, and practical work under the guidance either of older comrades or of teachers in the higher institutes for the organization of labor.

I do not think, however, that they will be able to confine themselves to this sort of academic work. In addition, they will have to prepare themselves for work which I would not hesitate to call training to catch, I will not say rogues, but something like that, and working out special ruses to screen their movements, their approach, etc.

If such proposals were made in West-European government institutions they would rouse frightful resentment, a feeling of moral indignation, etc.; but I trust that we have not become so bureaucratic as to be capable of that. NEP has not yet succeeded in gaining such respect as to cause any of us to be shocked at the idea that somebody may be caught. Our Soviet Republic is of such recent construction, and there are such heaps of the old lumber still lying around that it would hardly occur to anyone to be shocked at the idea that

we should delve into them by means of ruses, by means of investigations sometimes directed to rather remote sources or in a roundabout way. And even if it did occur to anyone to be shocked by this, we may be sure that such a person would make himself a laughing-stock.

Let us hope that our new Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will abandon what the French call *pruderie*, which we may call ridiculous primness, or ridiculous swank, and which plays entirely into the hands of our Soviet and Party bureaucracy. Let it be said in parentheses that we have bureaucrats in our Party offices as well as in Soviet offices.

When I said above that we must study and study hard in institutes for the higher organization of labor, etc., I did not by any means imply "studying" in the schoolroom way, nor did I confine myself to the idea of studying only in the schoolroom way. I hope that not a single genuine revolutionary will suspect me of refusing, in this case, to understand "studies" to include resorting to some semi-humorous trick, cunning device, piece of trickery or something of that sort. I know that in the staid and earnest states of Western Europe such an idea would horrify people and that not a single decent official would even entertain it. I hope, however, that we have not yet become as bureaucratic as all that and that in our midst the discussion of this idea will give rise to nothing more than amusement.

Indeed, why not combine pleasure with utility? Why not resort to some humorous or semi-humorous trick to expose something ridiculous, something harmful, something semi-ridiculous, semi-harmful, etc.?

It seems to me that our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will gain a great deal if it undertakes to examine these ideas, and that the list of cases in which our Central Control Commission and its colleagues in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection achieved a few of their most brilliant victories will be enriched by not a few exploits of our future Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and Central Control Commission members in places not quite mentionable in prim and staid textbooks.

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How can a Party institution be amalgamated with a Soviet institution? Is there not something improper in this suggestion?

I don't not ask these questions on my own behalf, but on behalf of those I hinted at above when I said that we have bureaucrats in our Party institutions as well as in the Soviet institutions.

But why, indeed, should we not amalgamate the two if this is in the interests of our work? Do we not all see that such an amalgamation has been very beneficial in the case of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, where it was brought about at the very beginning? Does not the Political Bureau discuss from the Party point of view many questions, both minor and important, concerning the "moves" we should make in reply to the "moves" of foreign powers in order to forestall their, say, cunning, if we are not to use a less respectable term? Is not this flexible amalgamation of a Soviet institution with a Party institution a source of great strength in our politics? I think that what has proved its usefulness, what has been definitely adopted in our foreign politics and has become so customary that it no longer calls forth any doubt in this field, will be at least as appropriate (in fact, I think it will be much more appropriate) for our state apparatus as a whole. The functions of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection cover our state apparatus as a whole, and its activities should affect all and every state institute without exception: local, central, commercial, purely administrative, educational, archive, theatrical, etc.—in short, all without any exception.

Why then should not an institution, whose activities have such wide scope, and which moreover requires such extraordinary flexibility of forms, be permitted to adopt this peculiar amalgamation of a Party control institution with a Soviet control institution with a Soviet control institution?

I see no obstacles to this. What is more, I think that such an amalgamation is the only guarantee of success in our work. I think that all doubts on this score arise in the dustiest corners of our government offices, and that they deserve to be treated with nothing but ridicule.

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Another doubt: is it expedient to combine educational activities with official activities? I think that it is not only expedient, but necessary. Generally speaking, in spite of our revolutionary attitude towards the West-European form of state, we have allowed ourselves to become infected with a number of its most harmful and ridiculous prejudices; to some extent we have been deliberately infected with them by our dear bureaucrats, who counted on being able again and again to fish in the muddy waters of these prejudices. And they did fish in these muddy waters to so great an extent that only the blind among us failed to see how extensively this fishing was practiced.

In all spheres of social, economic and political relationships we are "frightfully" revolutionary. but as regards precedence, the observance of the forms and rites of office management, our "revolutionariness" often gives way to the mustiest routine. On more than one occasion, we have witnessed the very interesting phenomenon of a great leap forward in social life being accompanied by amazing timidity when ever the slightest changes are proposed.

This is natural, for the boldest steps forward were taken in a field which was long reserved for theoretical study which was promoted mainly, and even almost exclusively in theory. The Russian, when away from work, found solace from bleak bureaucratic realities in unusually bold theoretical constructions, and that is why in our country these unusually bold theoretical constructions assumed an unusually lopsided character. Theoretical audacity in general as regards certain very minor reforms in office routine. Some great universal agrarian revolution was worked out with an audacity unexampled in any other country, and at the same time the imagination failed when it came to working out a tenth-rate reform in office routine; the imagination or patience, was lacking to apply to this reform the general propositions that produced such brilliant results when applied to general problems.

That is why in our present life reckless audacity goes hand in hand, to an astonishing degree, with timidity of thought even when it comes to very minor changes.

I think that this has happened in all really great revolutions for really great revolutions grow out of the contradictions between the old, between what is directed towards developing the old, and the very abstract striving for the new, which must be so new as not to contain the tiniest particle of the old.

And the more abrupt the revolution, the longer will many of these contradictions last.

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The general feature of our present life is the following: we have destroyed capitalist industry and have done our best to raze to the ground the medieval institutions and landed proprietorship, and thus created a small and very small peasantry, which is following the lead of the proletariat because it believes in the results of its revolutionary work. It is not easy for us, however, to keep going until the socialist revolution is victorious in more developed countries merely with the aid of this confidence, because economic necessity, especially under NEP, keeps the productivity of labor of the small and very small peasants at an extremely low level. Moreover, the international situation, too, threw Russia back and, by and large, reduced the labor productivity of the people to a level considerably below pre-war. The West-European capitalist powers, partly deliberately and partly unconsciously, did everything they could to throw us back, to utilize the elements of the Civil War in Russia in order to spread as much ruin in the country as possible. It was precisely this way out of the imperialist war that seemed to have many advantages. They argued somewhat as follows: "If we fail to overthrow the revolutionary system in Russia, we shall, at all

events, hinder its progress towards socialism. And from their point of view, they could argue no other way. In the end, their problem was half-solved. They failed to overthrow the new system created by the revolution, but they did prevent it from at once taking the step forward that would have justified the forecasts of the socialists, that would have enabled the latter to develop the productive forces with enormous speed, to develop all the potentialities which, taken together, would have produced socialism; socialists would thus have proved to all and sundry that socialism contains within itself gigantic forces and that mankind had now entered into a new stage of development of extraordinarily brilliant prospects.

The system of international relationships which has now taken shape is one in which a European state, Germany, is enslaved by the victor countries. Furthermore, owing to their victory, a number of states, the oldest states in the West, are in a position to make some insignificant concessions to their oppressed classes—concessions which, insignificant though they are, nevertheless retard the revolutionary movement in those countries and create some semblance of “class truce.”

At the same time, as a result of the last imperialist war, a number of countries of the East, India, China, etc., have been completely jolted out of the rut. Their development has definitely shifted to general European capitalist lines. The general European ferment has begun to affect them, and it is now clear to the whole world that they have been drawn into a process of development that must lead to a crisis in the whole of world capitalism.

Thus, at the present time we are confronted with the question—shall we be able to hold on with our small and very small peasant production, and in our present state of ruin, until the West-European capitalist countries consummate their development towards socialism? But they are consummating it not as we formerly expected. They are not consummating it through the gradual “maturing” of socialism, but through the exploitation of the first of the countries vanquished in the imperialist war combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has been definitely drawn into the revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement.

What tactics does this situation prescribe for our country? Obviously the following. We must display extreme caution so as to preserve our workers’ government and to retain our small and very small peasantry under its leadership and authority. We have the advantage that the whole world is now passing to a movement that must give rise to a world socialist revolution. But we are laboring under the disadvantage that the imperialists have succeeded in splitting the world into two camps; and this split is made more complicated by the fact that it is extremely difficult for Germany, which is really a land of advanced, cultured, capitalist development, to rise to her feet. all the capitalist powers of what is called the West are pecking at her and preventing her from rising. On the other hand, the entire East, with its hundreds of millions of exploited working people, reduced to the last degree of human suffering, has been forced into a position where its physical and material strength cannot possibly be compared with the physical, material and military strength of any of the much smaller West-European states.

Can we save ourselves from the impending conflict with these imperialist countries? May we hope that the internal antagonisms and conflicts between the thriving imperialist countries of the West and the thriving imperialist countries of the East will give us a second respite as they did the first time, when the campaign of the West-European counter-revolution in support of the Russian counter-revolution broke down owing to the antagonisms in the camp of the counter-revolutionaries of the West and the East, in the camp of the Eastern and Western exploiters, in the camp of Japan and the U.S.A.?

I think the reply to this question should be that the issue depends upon too many factors, and the outcome of the struggle as a whole can be forecast only because in the long run capitalism itself is educating and training the vast majority of the population of the globe for the struggle.

In the last analysis, the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And during the past few years it is this majority that has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured.

But what interests us is not the inevitability of this complete victory of socialism, but the tactics which we, the Russian Communist Party, we, the Russian Soviet Government, should pursue to prevent the West-European counter-revolutionary states from crushing us. To ensure our existence until the next military conflict between the counter-revolutionary imperialist West and the revolutionary and nationalist East, between the most civilized countries of the world and the Orientally backward countries which, however, comprise the majority, this majority must become civilized. We, too, lack enough civilization to enable us to pass straight on to socialism, although we do have the political requisites for it. We should adopt the following tactics, or pursue the following policy, to save ourselves.

We must strive to build up a state in which the workers retain the leadership of the peasants, in which they retain the confidence of the peasants, and by exercising the greatest economy remove every trace of extravagance from our social relations.

We must reduce our state apparatus to the utmost degree of economy. We must banish from it all traces of extravagance, of which so much has been left over from tsarist Russia, from its bureaucratic capitalist state machine.

Will not this be a reign of peasant limitations?

No. If we see to it that the working class retains its leadership over the peasantry, we shall be able, by exercising the greatest possible thrift in the economic life of our state, to use every saving we make to develop our large-scale machine industry, to develop electrification, the hydraulic extraction of peat, to complete the Volkhov Power Project, etc.

In this, and in this alone, lies our hope. Only when we have done this shall we, speaking figuratively, be able to change horses, to change from the peasant, muzhik horse of poverty, from the horse of an economy designed for a ruined peasant country, to the horse which the proletariat is seeking and must seek—the horse of large-scale machine industry, of electrification, of the Volkhov Power Station, etc.

That is how I link up in my mind the general plan of our work, of our policy, of our tactics, of our strategy, with the functions of the reorganized Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. This is what, in my opinion, justifies the exceptional care, the exceptional attention that we must devote to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection in raising it to an exceptionally high level, in giving it a leadership with Central Committee rights, etc., etc.

And this justification is that only by thoroughly purging our government machine, by reducing to the utmost everything that is not absolutely essential in it, shall we be certain of being able to keep going. Moreover, we shall be able to keep going not on the level of a small-peasant country, not on the level of universal limitation, but on a level steadily advancing to large-scale machine industry.

These are the lofty tasks that I dream of for our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. That is why I am planning for it the amalgamation of the most authoritative Party body with an "ordinary" People's Commissariat.

Lenin, Vol. 33: 487-502.



## RELIGION AND THE SOVIET STATE—TRIAL OF THE CATHOLIC CLERGY

22 March-2 April 1923

*Although the new Soviet state had taken a number of measures against religion and organized churches early in its existence, it began a general anti-religious campaign only in late 1922 and 1923. This had various component parts. One was the trial of a number of Catholic clergy. This trial reflected an interrelation between general anti-religious sentiments and international tensions, given that most of the clergy were Polish. It provoked a sharp reaction and extensive press coverage in some foreign countries, especially Poland, and helped shape Western perceptions of Soviet anti-religious policies. The translations are taken from Izvestiia between 23 March and 3 April. The material in brackets and omissions are from the original translation and editing.*

*Christian Exploits  
Trial of Roman Catholic Priests  
[Report of Izvestiia, 23 March]*

The trial of Archbishop Cieplak and a number of other representatives of the Roman Catholic clergy began yesterday in the Supreme Court.

One present at the trial becomes convinced that the Soviet authorities were right to include in the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R. Article 119 which provides the punishment for "taking advantage of religious prejudice with the aim to overthrow the Soviet regime or to resist its orders and instructions.

The hearing of the case begins with the activities of the accused after the promulgation of the decree concerning the separation of the Church from the State [Decree of January 23, 1918]. At a number of secret conferences which took place in Petrograd between the end of 1918 and 1920, the Roman Catholic clergy has worked out ways and means in connection with the enforcement of the said decree. Originals of the minutes of these conferences are among the materials collected by the preliminary investigation concerning the case of Cieplak and others. It was resolved that every way and means could be adopted: direct and indirect sorts of circulars and instructions have been worked out which called agreements between the groups of believers and the Soviet institutions profanation of the privileges of the Church." Believing Catholics have been forbidden to participate in these "transactions."

Naive and simple, and especially "religious," persons could probably think that a struggle is being carried on by the clergy only in the "formal religious sphere." But the holy fathers have very carelessly disclosed their plans. They have passed a resolution concerning the "struggle from the altar against the Bolshevik infection," which threatened the excommunication from the Church of all persons who joined the Communist Party. A blind man can see that the case is purely political and has nothing to do with religion. God's name is being used by the "fathers" only as means of psychological influence. Even Patriarch Tikhon did not dare to inaugurate such methods of unconcealed "pure politics."

The Roman Catholic clergy has not limited its activities to thorough utilization of every kind of religious propaganda and agitation against the Soviet power. It has established a formally religious but actually political organization with numerous branches, the object of which is to resist the enforcement of the Decree concerning the separation of Church and State. This organization consists of local committees of believers and a central committee at the Archbishop's "which should exist during the revolutionary time until a strong legal order is established in Russia." Any politically educated person will understand the last words as "until the overthrow of the Soviet power."

At one of the secret conferences in the beginning of 1920 Archbishop Cieplak proposed to inaugurate an "aggressive policy instead of a defensive one."

Thereafter the Roman Catholic clergy began to carry on open resistance to the orders and actions of the Petrograd Soviet in connection with the enforcement of the decree separating Church and State and the decree of February 23, 1922, concerning the confiscation of Church valuables. The disclosure of various details concerning the criminal activities accused will constitute the substance of the judicial investigation.

*Christian Exploits*  
*Trial of Roman Catholic Priests*  
[Report of *Izvestiia*, 24 March]

In the course of the examination of the accused, which has already lasted three days, it became clear that all the priests without exception continued to conduct Divine services in different places which had not been registered, contrary to the decree concerning the sealing of churches; consequently this conduct was the result of the refusal on their part to come to an agreement with the Soviet power. At these "private" services, sometimes from 100 to 150 persons participated, as stated by the accused themselves. The accused do not regard these actions as a violation of the decree concerning the separation of Church and State, explaining them as Divine services of "private, family" character. It has been established also that even from a formal standpoint these services have not been of "private" character, since they often took place in rooms adjacent to the churches. It is interesting to point out the following fact: the investigation disclosed at these services all the necessities of Church rites. The President Comrade Galkin and Prosecutor Krylenko are very much interested to discover where these necessities have been obtained since the churches were closed. All accused answered that the articles were their own property. It must be also pointed out that the "holy fathers" understood what a powerful weapon in their hands the teaching of Gospel to the youths was. They have been very stubborn in disregarding the decrees of the Soviet government concerning the separation of Church and State and continued during all the years of the revolution to teach the Gospel privately to groups of youths. The accused stated that they taught the Gospel in a private manner. Some of them declared that they were going to teach the Gospel in the future.

Certainly all the priests declared that they did not pursue any political aims in their activities, and still less counter-revolutionary aims, and that they could not possibly comply with the demands of the Soviet power, since these demands contradicted the teaching of their Church. All their actions must be explained by devotion to the Church. The struggle was purely ideological and not for uncontrolled possession of Church valuables. The real thoughts of the "holy fathers" have been disclosed by a document of "private character" which the Prosecutor Krylenko attached to the case. That is a letter written by the priest Lunevich [Juniewicz] (who told the Soviet officials to go away from the church) ) addressed to his brother, living in Moscow. In this letter the priest Lunevich [Juniewicz], in addition to such phrases as "we emphasize our discontent now and then" and "our positions are strong and we hope that the Lord will help us to hold on," says the following: "Our living conditions as before are not very bad, the people care for our welfare now even more than they did before." These are certainly important words. The letter was read in the court.

The Supreme Court paid its attention to a fact which concerns the charge brought against one of the chief accused, Archbishop Cieplak. At the time of the confiscation of church valuables the Iaroslavl priest, Rutkovski, made an inquiry of Archbishop Cieplak after he had received an order from the authorities to submit the list of valuables in his church. The letter sent a very explicit answer to Rutkovski: "The demand is illegal. Submit no information." That means that Cieplak gives an order to disobey the orders of the Soviet power.

"Does Cieplak understand his words the same way?" asked Krylenko. Cieplak explains that the word 'illegal' must be understood thus: the demand of the Soviet authorities is

illegal from the point of view of the Catholic Church. He certainly did not mean to say that the demand of the Soviet authorities is illegal. "Why in such case did you add the words: 'submit no information'?" asked Krylenko. The Archbishop was compelled to admit that the last words of his telegram contain practical instructions to the priest Rutkovski and that they did order the latter not to submit any information concerning the valuables present in the Church. Krylenko asked the Court to read the verdict passed by the Jaroslavl Revolutionary Tribunal concerning the case of the priest Rutkovski, who refused to submit the list of Church valuables.

The Court also read a circular sent by Cieplak on January 3, 1922, even prior to the promulgation of the decree concerning the confiscation of Church valuables (February 23, 1923). Foreseeing the "Church" questions which the priests would have to face after the promulgation of this decree, Cieplak "finds it necessary to give certain instructions to the Roman-Catholic clergy:

"First of all it is necessary strictly to observe the rules of the Church," reads the circular.

And the rules of the Church certainly say that the Church property and especially the necessities of the Church rites constitute the indisputable property of the churches, that they are sacred, and so forth. These articles cannot be handed over either to the groups of believers or to the State and therefore cannot be included in any lists or inventories or still less be confiscated without the special permission of the Church. In this circular Cieplak tried to justify, not only from religious but also from the judicial standpoint, the practical instructions which he gave to his subordinates. He also emphasized that in case "unauthorized institutions" made any demands in this sphere, there must be pointed out to them the decree separating Church and State, according to which the State has no right to interfere with the internal affairs of the Church, and also the Riga treaty, which guaranteed immunity to the Roman Catholic Church.

Not denying the right of Cieplak to give instructions to the Roman Catholic clergy, Krylenko reminds Cieplak that the decree separating Church and State says the Church buildings and the Church property are declared the property of the State and of the people, and that they can be handed to the groups of believers for temporary use only and according to special treaties. Krylenko called Cieplak's attention also to paragraph 7 of the Riga treaty, to which Cieplak himself referred as one guaranteeing the immunity of the Church in the R.S.F.S.R. This paragraph clearly says: "Within the limits of the internal legislation of the R.S.F.S.R." And, therefore, as long as there is the above amendment in the Riga treaty the Soviet power was right to confiscate the Church valuables, not only from the standpoint of the internal constitution of the R.S.F.S.R., but also from the standpoint of the obligations which the Republic assumed in the treaty with Poland.

Cieplak found nothing better for reply than to state that the amendment "within the limits of the internal legislation of the R.S.F.S.R." was understood by the Roman Catholics as a "pure formality." Cieplak stated also, that such interpretation was accepted not only by him but also by Russian and Polish lawyers.

"Why in such a case did you not inquire at the People's Commissariat of Justice for a definite explanation?" asked Krylenko.

"I considered that this matter is of an international character," replied Cieplak.

But, nevertheless, you made an inquiry of the Polish Government?"

Krylenko then asked to attach to the case a document which proved that Cieplak had communicated with the Pope in connection with the contract concerning the use of the churches. Cieplak stated that he is subordinate directly to the Vatican and has received an answer from the Pope's representative in Poland, Archbishop Lawrence. The answer says that "the Holy Father wants to inform him that he rejects a treaty of such a kind and that if the above mentioned (Soviet) government intends to close the churches, he, Cieplak, has to inform the Vatican directly."



From explanations given by Cieplak in regard to this document, which was read in the Court, it became obvious that in addition to the maintenance of communications with the Vatican and Poland through official channels (People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs) Cieplak had also private channels, which fact he was compelled to admit.

Then the judiciary investigation tried to disclose all the details of the underground work of the Roman Catholic clergy during the period 1918-1922. During this period a number of secret conferences took place at the archbishop's at which methods of resistance to the decree separating the Church from the State were discussed, as well as the "struggle from the Altar against the Bolshevik infection." This part of the investigation has particular interest (a number of interesting documents have been read in Court) and a special report concerning it will be given in the next issue.

[Signed by] L. N.

*Christian Exploits*  
*Trial of Roman Catholic Priests*  
[Report of *Izvestiia*, 25 March]

After the examination of Cieplak, Krylenko asked the Court to put down the most important points of his evidence: the fact, which he admitted, of his sending a telegram to the Iaroslavl priest Rutkovski forbidding the latter to submit the list or inventory of church valuables; the fact that the refusal on the part of Rutkovski to submit the inventory of Church valuables was a direct consequence of this telegram; and the fact that the circular sent by Cieplak on January 3, 1922, was a direct practical instruction to the Roman Catholic clergy as to what attitude they should take in order to resist the enforcement of the decree separating the Church from the State. Krylenko points also to the fact that Cieplak maintained communication with the Vatican and Poland through private channels, in other words illegally, and upon the receipt of an answer from the Pope's representative in Poland, forbidding the Roman Catholics to enter into any agreement with the Soviet power concerning the right to use the churches, Cieplak informed all Roman Catholic priests of this answer, not considering it necessary to inform the Soviet government of the same. Cieplak declared also that as far as the disposal of Church property is concerned the decisive word in this sphere belongs to the Archbishop.

It has already been pointed out that the accused explain all their criminal activities by the canons of their religion. Several canons of the Roman Catholic Church have been referred to during the legal proceedings. Cieplak stated that the canons are just as old as the Church itself and during many centuries no alteration has ever been made in them. These canons have been compiled in a Code by Pope Pius X. It is interesting to point to the fact that Cieplak himself admitted that these canons reflect to a certain extent the period of struggle of Pope against Emperor.

Cieplak gives the following answer in regard to the confiscation of Church valuables:

There could be no talk about sanctioning the confiscation of articles from the Roman Catholic churches. But, on the other hand, there was no definite and direct prohibition.

Next to Archbishop Cieplak in the dock sits the priest Butkevich [Budkiewicz], Superintendent of St. Catherine's Church in Petrograd, the property of which has been valued prior to the war at 7,000,000 rubles, and brought in about 300,000 rubles of yearly income. He is also one of the most active initiators of the counter-revolutionary movement among the Roman Catholic clergy. Butkevich [Budkiewicz] is not talkative; his answers are short, careful and indefinite. As he says, he has a poor memory. Fortunately, a few cases which Butkevich [Budkiewicz] happened to forget have been established by the documents. And documents are numerous: originals of minutes of the secret conferences which took place in the Archbishop's apartment, originals in Butkevich's [Budkiewicz's] handwriting. The accused Cieplak, Butkevich [Budkiewicz], Iunevich [Juniewicz], Vasilevski [Wasilewski],

Fedorov, Eismond, Khodnevič [Chodniewicz], Ianukovich [Janukowicz], Matulianis, Khvetsko [Chwiecko], Maletski [Malecki], and Ivanov admit that they participated in these conferences. The priests Troigo [Trojgo], Rutkovski, and Pronsketis deny their participation.

Butkevich [Budkiewicz] confirmed that at these conferences have been discussed all questions which arose in connection with the decree separating Church and State and the School from the Church, as well as the methods which the clergy should adopt in compliance with the canons of the Church—in other words, the question of non-conclusion of agreements concerning the use of churches, questions of the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards the Communist Party, and a number of other similar questions.

Krylenko asked the Court to read two documents personally written by Butkevich [Budkiewicz]: "Concerning the signing of an agreement under present conditions" and "Historical note concerning separation of the Church and State in Bolshevik Russia." Butkevich [Budkiewicz] writes that if the Archbishop permitted in 1918 the signing of contracts with the Soviet authorities concerning the use of churches, with certain amendments showing the temporary character of these contracts, it was because the downfall of the Soviet regime had been expected in the near future. But "since Bolshevism still exists and it is quite indefinite how long it is going to last we have no legal reasons to conclude any contracts without the permission of the Vatican." Budkiewicz further adds: "The signing of such contracts contradicts the canons of our Church, and those who sign them will be excommunicated." Budkiewicz further writes: "The non-signing of the contracts has an advantage—we shall not be bound by any obligations and the Bolsheviks will have to pay more attention to the protesting Roman Catholics than to the yielding ones. "Butkevich [Budkiewicz] recommends the policy of delays, protests, etc. He cynically admits that such policy is the most "practical one."

[Budkiewicz's] letters to Archbishop Cieplak and to a certain "Dear Sir" (private person) have been read in the Court. These documents show that Budkiewicz, who has always been and still is a Russian citizen, addressed the Polish Government with a request to take steps towards the return of the confiscated houses, churches, and confiscated church property generally. On July 18, 1918, he, together with Archbishop Ropp, took part in the solemn opening of the Polish Mission in Moscow. After a solemn Divine service and a dinner, the assembled Polish patriots sent a telegram to the Polish Government expressing their patriotic feelings, which telegram was also signed by Budkiewicz, who, as has been already stated, has been and is a Russian citizen.

It is interesting to point to the explanations given by Budkiewicz after he was requested by Krylenko to make them.

"I think that everything is so clearly stated in the documents that I find it useless to give any explanations," says Budkiewicz.

The Supreme Court and Krylenko fully agree with Budkiewicz that no explanations are necessary.

The rest of the fourth day of the trial was devoted to the ascertaining a number of details, which supplement the general picture of the criminal activities of the accused. It is also interesting to point out that at the very end of the examination, Cieplak stated that just before the trial began the Vatican gave permission to conclude contracts with the Soviet power in regard to the use of churches but the accused had no time to carry out this instruction....

#### SPEECH OF KRYLENKO

The debates have been opened by the speech of the Prosecutor, Krylenko. In his last explanations the accused, Cieplak, stated that the central question in the case might now be dropped, since the Vatican had sent new instructions just before the beginning of the trial permitting the signing of contracts with the Soviet authorities in regard to the use of

churches. From the standpoint of the accused, this fact certainly settles the question, since they explain their resistance to the policy of the government by the canons of their Church. But the object of the prosecution is not to study the canon of the Church, but to examine the activities of the accused under the conditions of actual life in Russia. Our Court is an institution which has to protect the revolution and the existing order. In this case the problem of the Court is to examine the question whether the laws of the Republic have been violated; to determine who of the accused has violated them; and finally, to decide whether these crimes appear to be socially dangerous for us. No canons, no doctrines which have not been confirmed or accepted by us, can be considered.

Krylenko further analyses the social, historical role of the Church. Reminding the Court that the Church has always been a definite reactionary force, Krylenko emphasizes that the Soviet power was right to include in its constitution an article depriving the clergy and the monks of all political rights, as has been done with other non-laboring and exploiting elements. The whole past of the Church shows us that the Church is our worst enemy. That is what the constitution of the Soviet power says.

Krylenko then emphasizes that the Church is a powerful means for enslaving the masses. That is why the decree of the Soviet power has strictly prohibited the teaching of Scripture to the youths under 18 years of age. On the other hand, the accused admit that up to the last moment they continued to teach Scripture to children from 7 years old.

The accused carried on during five years a desperate struggle for uncontrolled influence upon the minds of the masses and for uncontrolled disposal of Church valuables.

Krylenko further tries to ascertain the general line of counter-revolutionary activities of the accused. These activities consisted of the utilization of religious prejudices with the object of rousing the masses against the Soviet power and showing resistance to the enforcement of the laws of the Soviet government. And what about the preaching in the churches, when the priests called on the Catholic parents to struggle in favor of teaching Scripture to their children, contrary to the decrees of the Soviet power? That is a political war against the Soviet power! By agitating among the population against certain laws of the Soviet power, the priests agitated against the Soviet power as a whole. And after all that, the accused dare to say that they have not been carrying on a political struggle against us, but an "ideological" one!

Emphasizing certain points incriminating each of the accused separately Krylenko proves that all the accused have been united into an organization.

Krylenko urges that the case of the accused comes under Articles 63 and 119 of the Criminal Code, which provides the death penalty for such crimes. Krylenko demands capital punishment for the chief criminals, Archbishop Cieplak and the Priest Butkevich [Budkiewicz], as the initiators and organizers of the counter-revolutionary movement. The other priests should be sentenced to various terms, from 3 to 10 years. He also thinks that the case of the accused Sharnas [Sarnas], a Roman Catholic 17 years old, the charge against whom was participation in disorders, must be examined separately. Krylenko proposes that he be sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment on account of his youthful age.

The speech of Krylenko lasted two hours.

[signed] L. N.

#### THE VERDICT

The Supreme Court finds that the Roman Catholic Clergy of Petrograd, led by Archbishop Cieplak and Metropolitan Ropp, understood the decree separating the Church from the State as one granting to all Roman Catholics as to all other citizens complete freedom of religious feelings and absolute immunity of the believers while performing their religious services and, therefore, did not comply with Paragraphs 8, 9, 12, and 13 of the said decree; which established the right of the civil authorities to keep inventories and register the property; separated the School and the Church; deprived religious societies of property

rights and the rights of a "juridical person"; and declared the Church property the property of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic. However, this law was issued in the early days of the Revolution, and it was not enforced completely. The clergy then remained quiet. But in the course of time, when nationalization of properties (in compliance with the above decree) was commenced, with the confiscation of such enormous properties as that in possession of St. Catherine's Church in Petrograd, the Roman Catholic clergy began to work out practical measures of struggle against the Soviet power for the lost property and rights.

Being, however, quite convinced of the instability of the Soviet power and expecting its downfall any moment, the leaders of the Roman Catholic clergy in Russia have been inclined to permit the believers to conclude contacts with the Soviet authorities concerning the use of churches and property, considering these contracts unimportant and of a temporary character only, and still regarding the property as really belonging to the Church. The Priest Budkiewicz has even, with permission of Archbishop Ropp, pawned the property of the St. Catherine's Church to private persons for 600,000 rubles, with the understanding that this debt would be paid after the overthrow of the Soviet power and the return of property to the Church.

When Cieplak, Budkiewicz, Ropp and others lost their hope for the overthrow of the Soviet power, they began to organize mass resistance to the enforcement of the decree of January 23, 1918, separating the Church and the State, and have arranged a number of preliminary conferences for working out methods and combined action, deliberately and with the object of securing the return of the Church property, of undermining the dictatorship of the working class and the achievements of the October Revolution. Their efforts in this struggle included the following:

The Archbishop Cieplak, who replaced Ropp, considered (as he admitted in the Court) that the Church soviets [councils], which have been established on the initiative of the government for handling the Church property, are dangerous for the Church hierarchy, because they undermine the discipline among the believers and put an end to the uncontrolled handling of the property by the Church leaders. He issued an instruction to the subordinate clergy to resist by all means the establishment of soviets at the churches and not to sign any contracts with the authorities concerning Church property. As the result of an energetic campaign against the Soviet power by the priests Maletski [Malecki] Butkevich [Budkiewicz], Ianukovich [Janukowicz], Vasilevski [Wasilewski], Eismond, Iunevich [Juniewicz], Matulianis Khvetsko [Chwiecko], Troigo [Trojgo], Khodnevich [Chodniewicz], Ivanov and Fedorov, the Roman Catholics refused to sign the above contracts, this resulted in the closing of the Roman Catholic churches in Petrograd as having nobody to answer for their property. The measure was enforced in December 1922, causing indignation on the part of the Roman Catholic masses; and such indignation has been deliberately provoked by the above enumerated persons. When, before the Christmas holidays, a delegation of Roman Catholics went from Petrograd to Moscow and asked the permission of the People's Commissariat of Justice to open their churches, a corresponding permit was granted by the said Commissariat, on condition that instead of contracts the believers would sign a simplified receipt. Archbishop Cieplak, who received these documents, concealed them from the believers and from the Soviet authorities in Petrograd and declared that the Soviet government refused to permit him to open the churches on Christmas holidays. Cieplak by so doing provoked open insurrection against the Soviet power.

Furthermore, Cieplak, foreseeing the promulgation of the decree concerning the confiscation of Church valuables for the relief of the starving, issued in January 1922 a circular to all Roman Catholic priests in Russia stating that such confiscation was illegal and in the telegram to the Iaroslavl priest, Butkovski, he simply prohibited him to deliver the valuables and to submit an inventory of the Church property.

Simultaneously, a group of priests headed by Cieplak organized in Petrograd numerous conferences at which questions of a purely practical character were discussed, such as: the substance of Communism, the program of the Communist Party, and others. Ways and means have also been worked out for further resistance to the Soviet authorities with mass participation of the believers. They have published a counter-revolutionary magazine "Mogilevskaia Khronika" in the Polish language, which was a purely anti-Bolshevik publication.

One of the chief initiators of these conferences was the Priest Butkevich [Budkiewicz], who submitted at the conferences written reports on political matters and drafts of practical measures of struggle against the Soviet power. Thus, in anticipation of help from Warsaw and in expectation of instructions from the Vatican, Butkevich [Budkiewicz] proposed a policy of delays in negotiation with the Soviet power, which policy had to be changed later on into an offensive attitude with participation of the believers. This policy resulted in open resistance on the part of the believers, led by the same priests, and in the closing of the Petrograd Church of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin on Pervaia Rota street. The believers, led by the priests Khvetsko, Rutkovski and Pronsketis, showed resistance to the closing of the church, during which citizen Sharnas [Sarnas] insulted the authorities who tried to make up a list of valuables. A similar crime was committed by the believers of the St. Kazimir Church on Vshakovskaia Street, under the leadership of the priest Eismond, in July 1922, and by the believers of the St. Stanislaus Church under the leadership of the priest Juniewicz. Resistance to the authorities was shown also in the St. Catherine Church, the mob being led by the priest Khodnevich [Chodniewicz]; in the Churches of the Immaculate Conception, of St. Francis, of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, of the Sacred Heart of Maria, and of St. Bonifacius, the mob being led by the priests Vasilevski [Wasilewski], Ianukovich [Janukowicz], Matulianis, [Maletski] Malecki and Butkevich [Budkiewicz].

Furthermore the Priest Butkevich [Budkiewicz], being present in Moscow at the solemn opening of the first Polish Mission, sent together with other persons a telegram to the Polish Government, expressing his devotion to that government, despite the fact that he has been and still is a Russian citizen.

In addition to all that, the accused priests have declared in the Court that they consider obligatory for them only the orders of the Pope, not only in regard to religion itself but also in regard to the confiscation and nationalized Church property, in spite of the Pope's instructions being contradictory to the decrees of the Soviet government. The priests have also declared in the court that, disregarding the Article 121 of the Criminal Code they have been teaching and will continue to teach the so-called Gospel and have not and will not recognize the above mentioned Article prohibiting the teaching of the Gospel-

In connection with the above stated the Supreme Court found guilty:

1. Ian [Jan] Giatsintovich [sic!] Cieplak and Konstantin Iulianovich Butkevich [Bukiewicz], of deliberate supervision of the above counter revolutionary activities of an organization of the Petrograd Roman Catholic priests, which activities consisted in resistance to the Soviet power, undermining the dictatorship of the proletariat attempted restitution of the former property rights of the Church, and provoking uprisings of masses against the Soviet regime. These provocative actions resulted in uprisings which were due to the fact that the masses have been still under the influence of religious prejudice and also in refusals to obey the laws, which crimes come under Articles 62, 119, and 121 of the Criminal Code.

2. S. F. Eismond, E. S. Iunevich [Juniewicz], L. A. Khvetsko [Chwiecko], P. V. Khodnevich [Chodniewicz], L. I. Fedorov—of active participation the counter-revolutionary organization, established by Cieplak and Butkevich [Budkiewicz], which participation has been displayed by acts enumerate the descriptive part of the verdict, and also by refusal to obey the Soviet laws which crimes come under Articles 62, 119, and 121 of the Criminal Code.

3. A. I. Maletski [Malecki], A. M. Vasilevski [Wasilewski], P. I. Ianukovich [Janukowicz], T. I. Matulianis, I. I. Troigo [Trojgo], D. A. Ivanov, F. F. Rutkovski, and A. P. Pronsketis—of assisting the priests Cieplak and Butkevich [Budkiewicz] in their crimes, and of refusing to comply with the Soviet laws as well as of agitating against the Soviet regime, which actions have been described in the first part of the verdict and come under Articles 68, 69, Part I of Article 119 and 121 of the Criminal Code.

4. I. I. Sharnas [Sarnas]—of insulting the Soviet government at the time of the confiscation of Church valuables in the Assumption [of the Holy Virgin's] Church, which crime comes under article 78 of the Criminal Code.

The Court sentenced:

Cieplak and Butkevich [Budkiewicz]—to capital punishment—death.

Eismond, Iunevich [Juniewicz], Khvetsko [Chwiecko], Khodnevich [Chodniewicz] and Fedorov—to 10 years' imprisonment with strict isolation and with the loss of rights for the period of five years in accordance with Article 40 of the Criminal Code.

Maletski [Malecki], Vasilevski [Wasilewski], Matulianis, Troigo [Trojgo], Ivanov, Rutkovski, and Pronsketis—to 3 years' imprisonment, without strict isolation and with the loss of rights for the period of three years.

Sharnas [Sarnas]—to be imprisoned conditionally for 6 months and without the loss of rights.

In view of the fact that the accused continued to commit their crimes even after the declaration of the amnesty on November 7, 1922, the said amnesty must be applied in their cases. All the property of the accused Cieplak, Butkevich [Budkiewicz], Eismond, Iunevich [Juniewicz], Khvetsko [Chwiecko], Khodnevich [Chodniewicz], and Fedorov must be confiscated and included in the Treasury of the Republic. Sharnas [Sarnas] must be released from arrest.

### *Execution of the Verdict Concerning Cieplak and Budkiewicz is Postponed*

[Report of *Izvestiia*, 27 March]

The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee resolved:

To postpone the execution of verdict concerning Cieplak, Butkevich [Budkiewicz] and others until the special order of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee.

### *Resolution of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee:*

*Archbishop J. B. Cieplak's Death Sentence Suspended*

[Report of *Izvestiia*, 30 March]

The Presidium of the Central Execution Committee, having examined the appeal of citizens Cieplak and Budkiewicz who have been sentenced to capital punishment by the Supreme Court, resolved:

I. The activities of citizen Cieplak, which have been established by the Supreme Court and which have been deliberately directed against the interests of the working class and the fundamental achievements of the Proletarian Revolution, have been committed by means of ill-intentioned misinterpretation of the religious freedom which has been guaranteed by the law to all citizens of the Republic. This must be regarded as one of the greatest crimes, for which in the revolutionary Republic, which continues to be surrounded by numerous enemies, there can be no other punishment but that ordered by the Supreme Court.

Taking into consideration, however, that citizen Cieplak is the representative of a religious teaching which in the times of Tsarism and the bourgeois Republic suffered from oppression, and the execution of the deserved sentence against citizen Cieplak could probably be interpreted by the unenlightened of the Roman Catholic citizens of Russia, whose religious prejudice has been exploited by Cieplak and his followers, as directed especially against a priest of their religion—

To commute the Supreme Court's sentence of capital punishment against citizen Cieplak to 10 years' imprisonment with strict isolation.

2. In regard to the accused citizen Budkiewicz, who combined his criminal activities on a religious basis with open counter-revolutionary activities in contact with a foreign bourgeois government which is hostile towards the Soviet Republic, and by so doing used his post of priest for open treason to the state—

To reject the appeal for pardon.

President of the Central Executive Committee:

M. KALININ

Secretary of the Central Executive Committee:

T. SAPRONOV

Moscow, Kremlin

March 29, 1923

*Answer of the Soviet Government to the Declaration of the Polish Premier Sikorski*  
[Report of *Izvestiia*, 3 April]

From the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs.

In connection with the declarations of the Polish Premier Sikorski, in the Senate and in an interview with the Minister of the R.S.F.S.R. in Poland, Comrade Obolenskii, with reference to the trial of the Catholic clergy in Moscow, the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs has instructed Comrade Obolenskii to hand the Polish Government the following verbal note:

"By instruction of the Russian Government, the Legation brings the following to the attention of the Polish Government:

"The Russian Government finds a plain contradiction between the repeated peaceful assurance of the Polish Government and the declarations of the President of the Council of Ministers with respect to the Cieplak affair. In view of the fact that every government has the indisputable right to punish criminals in accordance with its own laws in its own country, the attempt to interfere with that right and the attempt to hinder the execution of a legal sentence pronounced against a number of Russian citizens, convicted of crimes against the People and the State, (an attempt) accompanied moreover with threats and unparalleled insults addressed to the Russian Government, is unquestionably an unfriendly act, and displays an aggressive policy towards Russia. The Russian Government finds it superfluous to consider the inadmissible expressions of which the declarations of the President of the Council of Ministers consist, and indignantly repels his unparalleled claim. The Russian Government in particular repels the claim of the Polish Government to play in Russia the role of protector of Russian citizens of Polish origin, and reminds the Polish Government that there are living in the bounds of Poland ten million Ukrainians and Belorussians with respect to which the Polish Government violates the most elementary principles guaranteeing the existence of national minorities. Categorically denying that the representatives of the Soviet Government told the Polish Minister in Moscow, or anyone whatsoever, that this trial had merely formal importance and would not have any serious results, the Russian Government refuses to enter upon a discussion of the inadmissible and unfounded accusations against the Russian Court and the Russian authorities. The Russian Government declares that responsibility for the consequences of such a step, unexampled in international relations, rests exclusively with the Polish Government"

March 30, 1923

*The Shooting of Mgr. Budkiewicz*  
[Report of *Izvestiia*, 3 April]

The sentence of the Supreme Court of the Republic with respect to Butkevich [Budkiewicz], that he be shot, has been executed, his plea for pardon having been denied by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

Szczesniak, 113-144.

## RESOLUTION ON ANTI-RELIGIOUS AGITATION AND PROPAGANDA

25 April 1923

*The evolving anti-religious campaign discussed in the introduction to the previous document found formal statement is this resolution of the 12th Party Congress. See also other documents in this volume.*

ON THE ORGANIZATION OF  
ANTI-RELIGIOUS AGITATION AND PROPAGANDA

The revolution shattered the religious prejudice of the broad laboring masses, unmasking the counter-revolutionary role historically assumed by church organizations in the service of capital and landowners.

However, so long as the revolutionary process has not yet transformed the economy of millions of peasants, who continue to exist in those conditions of heavy dependence on nature in which they have found themselves over the centuries, so long as semi-capitalist productive relations continue to remain intact in the cities and even develop further under the conditions of NEP, and so long as our school and political enlightenment work still is not in a position to serve adequately the laboring city, much less the country—until that time the ramshackle and life damaging religious prejudices will continue to hold their ground. “Only the realization of conscious and systematic social and economic activity of the masses will lead to the disappearance of religious prejudices.” [Party Program, 22 March 1919—see *Documents of Soviet History*, I, 332—R.W.]

At the present time we see along with the breakdown of the old church organizations, especially the Orthodox church and the decline of the influence of Orthodox faith and its church hierarchy (the dimensions of which, however, should not under any circumstances be exaggerated, especially in the countryside), the significant growth of a few sects whose leaders are connected to well-known elements of the European and American bourgeoisie.

In these conditions the work of the party for the final destruction of religious belief in all its forms among the workers and peasant masses inevitably acquires first of all the character of an intensified, systematic propaganda, which clearly and persuasively reveals to each worker and peasant the falsehood and contrariness to his interests of all religions, which exposes the connections of various religious groups with the interests of the ruling classes, and which replaces the outmoded remnants of religious ideas with clear scientific views of nature and human society. In doing this, as stated in the Party program, it is necessary carefully to avoid any insult to the feelings of believers, which leads only to the strengthening of religious fanaticism. Deliberately coarse methods which often are practiced both in the center and locally, [such as] the mocking of articles of faith and cults instead of serious analysis and explanation, does not hasten but instead hampers the freeing of the toiling masses from religious prejudices.

While acknowledging significant successes in this area, it is necessary, however, to underscore that the majority of the literature which has been published cannot appeal to a mass readership. It is necessary to publish pamphlets and leaflets for the average worker or peasant which, in a form they can understand, answer questions about the origins of the world, of life and the essence of human relations, expose the counterrevolutionary role of religion and the church (especially the Russian Church—its origins, evolution, and position in relation to the class government and the liberation movement of the proletariat and peasantry at various times), and also show the physiognomy and actual class nature of various sects which have influence over the popular masses. Remembering that the thirty million Moslem population of the Union Republics has up to now firmly held to numerous medieval prejudices which are bound up with religion and which are used for counter-revolutionary aims, it is necessary to develop ways and methods of liquidating these prejudices, taking into account the special characteristics of various nationalities.



In the system of mass propaganda which is being developed and which the Party is employing on a larger and larger scale, it is imperative to devote special attention and space to anti-religious mass propaganda in the form of lively and understandable lectures, with careful selection of lecturers, including attracting specialists, scientists and materialists to give these lectures. It is necessary to attend to the working out of special methods of anti-religious propaganda relevant to the social setting.

The Party can cope with these tasks if it is able in the near future to organize the broad preparations of its own agitators and propagandists in the area of struggle with religion, using for this goal all aspects of soviet-party education, beginning with the Communist universities. It is necessary in all areas of Communist education to introduce special courses on the origin, development and history of religion, religious faiths, cults and religious church organizations, developing these courses in close connection with the study of human society and the class struggle of the exploited against the exploiters and with exposure of the many-sided connections of capital with religious propaganda. Along with the programs of the anti-Soviet political parties, it is necessary to acquaint students of soviet-party schools with the physiognomy and activities of various religious organizations that are trying to exercise influence over the worker and peasant masses to the detriment of the Communist Party. While introducing anti-religious education into the general system of Communist education, it is imperative at the same time by all possible means to support, both in the halls of Communist educational establishments and outside of them, special anti-religious circles and seminars, with proper party direction of their work.

While proceeding to establish systematic anti-religious propaganda and agitation, as one of the best means of expanding party influence on the broad laboring masses, the Party must not forget that all of our anti-religious agitation and propaganda cannot touch the depths of the people until such a time as we can finally budge from the standstill in the work of the education of the laboring masses of the city and country in a spirit of a scientific materialist natural science and until the great majority of the rural population overcomes illiteracy.

*Kommunisticheskaia Partiia Sovetskogo Soiuz a rezoliutsiia i resheniia, II: 469-72.*



#### ON PARTY ORGANIZATION—12TH PARTY CONGRESS

25 April 1923

*The 12th Party Congress, held against the background of Lenin's effective removal from active political life because of illness and of the emerging split between Trotsky and the triumvirate (Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev), addressed important problems of party membership and organization. This resolution of the Congress provided for enlargement of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission. Lenin had earlier proposed enlarging the latter as a way of diluting the top party leadership's domination and of infusing true "proletarian" elements. Ironically, the changes were intended by the current leaders to strengthen central control and unity, and the enlargement worked to enhance Stalin's power because of his dominant role in the Secretariat and in personnel matters. The membership provision reflected the Party's ongoing concern with what it considered an insufficient percentage of members who were true industrial workers. It was reinforced in early 1924 by the so-called "Lenin Enrollment" of new Party members, announced to commemorate Lenin's death, which*

*stated that "only production workers are to be taken into the Party." Efforts to dilute the intelligentsia and white collar elements by increasing the recruitment of actual factory workers was to be a recurring theme throughout Soviet history, and ultimately an unsuccessful effort.*

## ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTION

### I

#### 1. THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM

The Congress elects forty Central Committee members and fifteen to twenty candidate members.

The purpose of the expansion is to bring new members into the Central Committee—primarily local party workers, and, in particular, those from the working class who have the best ties with the proletarian masses.

In addition to the forty persons with deciding votes, a) candidate members of the Central Committee and b) members of the Central Control Commission presidium, are entitled to participate in Central Committee plenums with a consultative vote.

The same persons can be simultaneously candidate members of the Central Committee and members of the Central Control Commission; when becoming a member of the Central Committee, the candidate must relinquish his position in the Central Control Commission.

The Central Committee plenum meets regularly at least once every two months. Each plenum decides on the date of the next plenum, which date may be changed only as an exceptional measure by a joint decision of the Politburo and Orgburo. The plenum meets for two to three days in order to be able to discuss seriously the items on the agenda. All of the most fundamental issues are to be decided by the plenum. Especially during the two or three weeks preceding the ordinary meeting of the plenum the Politburo must systematically include on the agenda of the plenum all important questions whose decision can be postponed. The preparatory work for plenums must be done more thoroughly than has been the case up until now. All materials for the forthcoming plenum, at least on the most important items, must be distributed in time to all Central Committee members. At each plenum the Politburo will submit a report on its activities in the intervening period.

Extraordinary meetings of the plenum are convoked by decision of the Politburo or at the demand of one-fourth of the members of the plenum.

#### 2. THE POLITBURO

The Politburo is elected by the Central Committee plenum, with a membership not to exceed seven members and four candidate members.

In addition to Central Committee members, three permanent representatives of the Central Control Commission, from the latter's presidium, have the right to be present at Politburo meetings. The new Central Committee is hereby instructed to determine how Central Committee members who are not in the Politburo, and also the Central Control Commission presidium, are to be supplied with Politburo documents.

The new Central Committee is instructed to take all necessary steps to improve the Politburo's work in respect of its planned guidance of state—and, in particular, of economic—organs.

#### 3. THE ORGBURO

The Orgburo consists of seven members and four candidate members.

Three representatives of the Central Control Commission are to be present at Orgburo meetings. Guberniia committee secretaries making reports will have a consultative vote at Orgburo meetings. Members of oblast central committee bureaus and of krai committee bureaus will also have the right to be present at Orgburo meetings with a consultative vote.

Members of the Central Committee may appeal Orgburo decisions to the Politburo, and Secretariat decisions to the Orgburo; in both cases the execution of such decisions is suspended.

#### 4. THE CENTRAL CONTROL COMMISSION

It is understood that there must be a division of labor between party and state organs (in the spirit of the resolution of the XI Party Congress), but without any infringement on the party's guiding role. To ensure that the party exercises not merely verbal, but real leadership of state and economic organs, the closest organizational tie must be established between leading state and party control organs at such central points as, for example, the reorganized Rabkrin.

The Congress will elect fifty Central Control Commission members, primarily workers and peasants with substantial length of party membership who are suitable for party-control and soviet-control work. The principal task of the Central Control Commission will be to ensure observance of the party line in all respects by all soviet organs. The Central Control Commission's functions are to be extended in line with this while at the same time it retains the tasks assigned to it by the party rules. The Central Control Commission plenum will elect a presidium of nine comrades whose qualifications are high in all respects, i.e., party workers more or less of Central Committee quality. Rabkrin is appointed by the party Central Committee, where possible from the members of the Central Control Commission presidium. At the same time, the board of the commissariat must include several members of the Central Control Commission presidium. Not less than half of the remaining Central Control Commission members are assigned to Rabkrin and, with regard to the execution of their Soviet assignments, work under the guidance of the board of Rabkrin in accordance with the directives of the instructions, and the resolution on concerted action elaborated by the Central Control Commission presidium together with the commissariat board, and approved by the party Central Committee.

As a rule, plenums of the Central Control Commission will take place every two months immediately prior to the Central Committee plenum.

The party Central Committee will delegate its representatives with a consultative vote, to plenums of the Central Control Commission.

Proposals on necessary changes and measures to improve the state apparatus, economic-administrative work, etc., and also those relating to the replacement of leading party workers at the local level and at the center are submitted by the Central Control Commission presidium to the party Central Committee—to the Plenum, the Politburo, or the Orgburo, depending upon the nature of the problem.

All basic issues relating to the functioning of the Rabkrin and to improving the state apparatus, as well as major practical measures and the assignment of Central Control Commission members to work in Rabkrin, are to be discussed at the permanent joint meetings of the Central Control Commission presidium and the board of Rabkrin; these meetings are to be convoked periodically, not less than twice a month.

The statutory position of the conference remains as before, i.e., its decisions must be approved by the Central Committee.

All Central Control Commission members and candidate members participate in the all-Russian conference with a consultative vote.

## II

### THE ORGANIZATIONAL REGULATION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE RKP

The threat represented by the NEP to the internal composition of the RKP should not be under-rated. The possibility that certain party cells will degenerate is not excluded. Remaining the only legal party, and at the same time being in power, the party cannot fail to take into account the fact that for several years to come its ranks will inevitably be infiltrated

by alien elements. That being the case, the following measure, among others, is necessary: *most probably it will be necessary, every year at the party Congress, to carry out major organizational maneuvers aimed at regulating the party's composition* (admission to membership, etc.) *in order systematically to improve the composition of the RKP.*

The Party accepts, and must accept, not only workers, but also peasants, Red Army men, employees, students, etc., as members of RKP. But, as a proletarian party, it must systematically heighten the percentage of industrial workers in the Party and, at the same time, regulate and limit the admission to the Party of all other elements. In the final analysis, one of the most important guarantees against the above dangers is, above all, the proletarian make-up of the party itself.

In recent years the percentage of working-class party members has been systematically increasing. There are large numbers of workers in leading state, party, and trade union posts. But the party has not yet achieved a sufficient preponderance of industrial workers among the whole 500,000 members and candidate members of the RKP.

This is even more true for the candidates, as was disclosed by the party census and subsequently.

The Congress hereby notes that in recent years there has been a particularly powerful influx of persons desiring to join the RKP, and, as it is once again becoming necessary to adopt the most attentive and painstaking attitude toward the matter of admission into the Party, the Congress recognizes the following measures as necessary:

a. the number of persons required to give references for industrial workers engaged in production is for the next year (until the XIII Congress) to be reduced from three to two—with two years' party membership; the same procedure is also to be applicable to Red Army men (of worker or peasant origin) with not less than one year's membership in the Komsomol;

b. working-class members of the Komsomol may be admitted into the RKP upon the recommendation of one party member of three years' standing together with an affirmative decision of the local committee of the Komsomol;

c. while for non-working-class persons the existing statutory conditions for admission into the Party remain unchanged, the absolute obligation of the strict fulfillment of all statutory requirements relating to this matter is hereby confirmed, with the guberniia committees bearing particular responsibility;

d. during 1923 and 1924 (up to the XIII Party Congress) *only* industrial workers engaged in production are to be promoted from candidate member to member, all others being left as candidates for one more year in order to enable these candidates to obtain the best party preparation;

e. certain special practical measures must be taken to facilitate the admission of industrial workers into the party.

To this end the Congress orders party committees to organize special missions (repeated not once but several times), of comrades with substantial party experience and appropriate length of time as party members, to industrial areas; and also to organize systematic visits by them to factories and plants in order to meet workers desiring to enter the party. After attentive examination and collection of the necessary attestations on workers desiring to enter the party (candidates), and with the co-operation of the party cells, the party comrades who have participated in these missions to factories and plants must in appropriate circumstances act as sponsors before the party committee. This measure must in no way weaken the work of the party cells themselves on bringing new working-class members into the party.

Deviations from the established procedure for admitting members into the RKP are in each case permitted only as an exceptional measure and, in each case, only by special decision of the Central Committee.

The Congress considers it necessary to adopt systematic measures to improve the party's composition, imposing a series of limitations on the admission into the party of persons from non-proletarian strata as well as from other parties. But once accepted into the party, after passing all the preliminary tests and limitations, the party members must, of course, enjoy all the rights of party members generally. It would be entirely inadmissible to continue to regard such comrades with distrust after their admission, because of their social origin or their prior adherence to other parties. A resolute struggle must be conducted against the slightest attempt to create an atmosphere of dividing party members into those with full rights and those with less than full rights.

In view of the motley social make-up of certain party organizations, and the necessity of strengthening them, the Congress considers it advisable when necessary to conduct a verification and purge of the party members of some organizations. Such a verification may be conducted only by decision of the Central Committee.

### III

#### PARTY ORGANIZATIONAL WORK AND THE SELECTION OF PARTY WORKERS

The most important method for strengthening the party organization, other than a purge, is the already broadly employed system of improving and selecting the leading cadre of party workers, from the guberniia and oblast committee secretaries to the cell secretaries.

This has been done in the following way: by requiring the secretaries of party organizations (starting with the cell) to have been party members for a certain period of time, thus concentrating in party work those party comrades who have undergone the best political training and testing; by replacing the previous cell secretaries who carried out technical functions in the raion, by party organizers capable of conducting the cell's party work and of involving all cell members in this work, and—which is particularly important—by beginning to carry out the selection of these cell organizers (primarily cells in industrial enterprises) under the active guidance of party committees; by setting up a network of instructors from the Central Committee to the uezd committee and the raion committee which was, on the one hand, a way of tying together and raising party work and, on the other, a way of practically training new cadres of party workers; by placing party work in working-class centers under special observation and giving it intensified support by party forces, funds, and literature (both in industrial areas and in certain larger enterprises), and by a series of other measures.

The Congress supports these measures and recognizes the need to continue and intensify the work already undertaken in this connection by the party organizations.

At the same time the Congress recognizes that the party's immediate task is to strengthen party leadership in selecting leaders for soviet, in particular, economic, and other organs, which must be done by means of a correct and comprehensive system of evaluating and selecting leaders and responsible workers in soviet, economic, co-operative, and trade union organizations.

To this end the Congress instructs the Central Committee to take all steps to expand and fortify the party's evaluating and assigning organs at the center and at the local level in order to encompass the whole mass of Communists and Communist sympathizers in all areas of the economy and administration without exception.

### IV

#### THE GUBERNIIA CONFERENCES

It is hereby decreed that ordinary guberniia party conferences are not to be held twice a year, but once a year.

## V

## PARTY EDUCATIONAL WORK, ESPECIALLY AMONG YOUTH

The existing circumstances make the consolidation of party organizational work among the mass of party members, at the present time, a task of primary importance.

The Congress hereby notes that *too little attention is still being devoted to work with youth*. The Congress instructs the Central Committee to take the most decisive measures to ensure that party organizations at the uezd, guberniia, and all-Russian levels devote to work with youth as much attention and staff as this most important branch of work deserves, the party's future depending upon it.

The older party members must direct particular attention to this very important work. In addition to everything else, effective assistance by the older party members to the training of the younger generation of Communists for work will bring about the radical elimination of any and all friction among the different age groups within the Party. The party's strength will reside precisely in its success in *establishing an uninterrupted bond between the adolescent youth and the older generation of revolutionaries*, unifying in the party's ranks all that is viable in the revolutionaries of both generations.

A Central Committee school for uezd party committee secretaries, enrolling 200-300 persons, is to be organized on an urgent basis.

The Central Committee is instructed to take urgent steps to ensure that the staffs of periodical publications, especially in the provincial industrial regions, work in a business-like way and in the party spirit.

The new Central Committee is instructed to take steps to ensure that party comrades in responsible positions, who need further education, be enabled to secure the necessary leave for this purpose.

## VI

## THE ORGANS CONCERNED WITH PARTY HISTORY

To ensure the regular and most rapid implementation of the tasks assigned to the Institute of Party History, the Congress resolves:

1. The existing Central Committee resolution that the Institute's organs are sections of corresponding party committees is hereby confirmed.
2. The Central Committee must provide, both at the center and at the local level, the necessary staff for work exclusively in party history.
3. The monetary resources needed to support the Institute of Party History and its organs, as well as to cover their publication activity, are to be found and firmly included in budgetary estimates.

McNeal/Gregor, 197-203.



## RESOLUTION ON THE NATIONALITY QUESTION

25 April 1923

*The "nationality question" bedeviled the Soviet leaders as they struggled to come to terms with the strength of nationalist sentiments, which conflicted with their own desire for a strong*

*central state and their belief in the primacy of class over national identity. The problem was made the more pressing by the formation of the USSR, then in process. This forced the Party to clarify the relation of the central government to the republics and, inherent in that, of the Russians (Great Russians) to the other nationality groups. The latter identified the Russians with imperial tendencies and central domination, and many, even some Party members, argued for extensive autonomy for the nationality based republics. At the same time the Party recognized that its own base in the non-Russian regions tended to rest on the Russians residing in industrial centers in the midst of much larger, more rural, native populations. It was important for the Party both to recruit more non-Russians and to have Russian members of the Party be more aware of national sensibilities. The result was what came to be known as the policy of "korenizatsiia," which might loosely be defined as "indigenization" or "sinking roots." It encouraged local Party leaders of Russian origins to learn local languages and culture. It also encouraged (intended or not) a flourishing of cultural and educational development in the larger nationality areas—such as Ukraine. This policy became controversial itself and was one of the victims of Stalin's centralizing policies at the end of the decade. Ironically, even while establishing this policy and exhorting local party officials to sensitivity, the language used worked in the opposite direction with its constant reference to "backward" cultures and peoples and its implicit assumption that Russian culture represented "advanced" development. The resolution, which followed a prolonged and bitter debate within the Party, was drafted by Stalin, who was Commissar for Nationalities. The resolution, with its somewhat contradictory warnings against Great Russian chauvinism while suggesting the leading role the Russians would play, represented something of a middle ground among competing points of view. While it generally followed Stalin's draft, some passages were added, some of which seem to strengthen the rights of the local nationalities. See also the Central Committee's resolution on "practical measures" for implementing this policy, below, 12 June 1923. See also Lenin's comments on the nationality issue at the end of volume two of Documents of Soviet History.*

### **National Factors in Party and State Affairs**

1. Already in the last century the development of capitalism revealed the tendency to internationalize the modes of production and exchange, to eliminate national isolation, to bring peoples into closer economic relations, and gradually to unite vast territories into a single connected whole. The further development of capitalism, the development of the world market, the establishment of the great sea and rail routes, the export of capital, and so on, still further strengthened this tendency and bound peoples of the most diverse types by the ties of international division of labor and all-round mutual dependence. In so far as this process was a reflection of the colossal development of productive forces, in so far as it helped to destroy national aloofness and the opposition of interests of the various peoples, it was and is a progressive process, for it is creating the material prerequisites for the future world socialist economic system.

2. But this tendency developed in peculiar forms that were completely at variance with its intrinsic historical significance. The mutual dependence of peoples and the economic union of territories took place in the course of the development of capitalism not as a result of the co-operation of nations as entities with equal rights, but by means of the subjugation of some nations by others, by means of the oppression and exploitation of less developed nations by more developed nations. Colonial plunder and annexations, national oppression and inequality, imperialist tyranny and violence, colonial slavery and national subjection, and, finally, the struggle among the "civilized" nations for domination over the "uncivilized" peoples—such were the forms within which the development of closer economic relations of peoples took place. For that reason we find that, side by side with the tendency towards union, there arose a tendency to destroy the forcible forms of such union, a struggle for the liberation of the oppressed colonies and dependent nationalities from the

imperialist yoke. Since the latter tendency signified a revolt of the oppressed masses against imperialist forms of union, since it demanded the union of nations on the basis of cooperation and voluntary union, it was and is a progressive tendency, for it is creating the spiritual prerequisites for the future world socialist economy.

3. The struggle between these two principal tendencies, expressed in forms that are natural to capitalism, filled the history of the multi-national bourgeois states during the last half-century. The irreconcilable contradiction between these tendencies within the framework of capitalist development was the underlying cause of the internal unsoundness and organic instability of the bourgeois colonial states. Inevitable conflicts within such states and inevitable wars between them; the disintegration of the old colonial states and the formation of new ones; a new drive for colonies and a new disintegration of the multi-national states leading to a new re-fashioning of the political map of the world—such are the results of this fundamental contradiction. The break-up of the old Russia, Austria-Hungary and Turkey, on the one hand, and the history of such colonial states as Great Britain and the old Germany, on the other, and, lastly, the “great” imperialist war and the growth of the revolutionary movement of the colonial and unequal nations—all these and similar facts clearly point to the instability and insecurity of the multi-national bourgeois states

Thus, the irreconcilable contradiction between the process of economic union of peoples and the imperialist methods of accomplishing this union was the cause of the inability, helplessness and impotence of the bourgeoisie in finding a correct approach to the solution of the national question.

4. Our Party took these circumstances into account and based its policy in the national question on the right of nations to self-determination, the right of peoples to independent state existence. The Party recognized this inalienable right of nations from the moment it came into being, at its first congress (in 1898), when the contradictions of capitalism in connection with the national question were not yet fully and clearly defined. Later it invariably re-affirmed its national program in special decisions and resolutions of its congresses and conferences, up to the October Revolution. The imperialist war, and the mighty revolutionary movement in the colonies to which it gave rise, only provided new confirmation of the correctness of the Party's decisions on the national question. The gist of these decisions is: a) emphatic repudiation of every form of coercion in relation to nationalities; b) recognition of the equality and sovereignty of peoples in determining their destinies; c) recognition of the principle that a durable union of peoples can be achieved only on the basis of cooperation and voluntary consent; d) proclamation of the truth that such a union can be realized only as the result of the overthrow of the power of capital.

In the course of its work, our Party never tired of advancing this program of national liberation in opposition to the frankly oppressive policy of tsarism, and also to the half-hearted, semi-imperialist policy of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. Whereas the tsarist Russification policy created a gulf between tsarism and the non-Russian nationalities of the old Russia, and whereas the semi-imperialist policy of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries caused the best elements among these nationalities to desert Kerenskyism, the liberation policy pursued by our Party won for it the sympathy and support of the broad masses among those nationalities in their struggle against tsarism and the imperialist Russian bourgeoisie. There can scarcely be any doubt that this sympathy and support was one of the decisive factors that determined the victory our Party achieved in the October days.

5. The October Revolution gave practical effect to our Party's decisions on the national question. By overthrowing the power of the landlords and capitalists, the chief vehicles of national oppression, and by putting the proletariat in power, the October Revolution at one blow shattered the chains of national oppression, upset the old relations between peoples, struck at the root of the old national enmity, cleared the way for the co-operation of



peoples, and it won for the Russian proletariat the confidence of its brothers of other nationalities not only in Russia, but also in Europe and Asia. It scarcely needs proof that had it not won this confidence, the Russian proletariat could not have defeated Kolchak and Denikin, Yudenich and Wrangel. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the oppressed nationalities could not have achieved their liberation if the dictatorship of the proletariat had not been established in central Russia. National enmity and national conflicts are inevitable and unavoidable as long as capital is in power, as long as the petty bourgeoisie, and above all the peasantry of the formerly "dominant" nation, permeated as they are with nationalist prejudices, follow the capitalists. In contrast, national peace and national freedom may be considered assured if the peasantry and the other petty-bourgeois sections of the population follow the proletariat, that is, if the dictatorship of the proletariat is assured. Hence, the victory of the Soviets and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat are the basis, the foundation, on which the fraternal co-operation of peoples within a single state union can be built up.

6. But the results of the October Revolution are not limited to the abolition of national oppression and the creation of a basis for the union of peoples. In the course of its development the October Revolution also evolved the forms of this union and laid down the main lines for the union of the peoples in a single union state. In the first period of the Revolution, when the laboring masses among the nationalities first began to feel that they were independent national units, while the threat of foreign intervention had not yet become a real danger, cooperation between the peoples did not yet have a fully defined, well-established form. During the Civil War and intervention, when the requirements of the military self-defence of the national republics came to the forefront, while questions of economic construction were not yet on the order of the day, cooperation took the form of a military alliance. Finally, in the post-war period, when questions of the restoration of the productive forces destroyed by the war came into the forefront, the military alliance was supplemented by an economic alliance. The union of the national republics into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics marks the concluding stage in the development of the forms of co-operation, which have now assumed the character of a military, economic and political union of peoples into a single, multinational, Soviet state.

Thus, in the Soviet system the proletariat found the key to the correct solution of the national question and discovered the way to organize a stable multi-national state on the basis of national equality of rights and voluntary consent.

7. But finding the key to the correct solution of the national question does not yet mean solving it fully and finally, and it does not yet mean giving the solution concrete and practical shape. In order to put into effect correctly the national program advanced by the October Revolution, it is also necessary to surmount the obstacles which we have inherited from the past period of national oppression, and which cannot be surmounted at one stroke, in a short space of time.

This heritage consists, firstly, in the survival of dominant-nation chauvinism, which is a reflection of the former privileged position of the Great Russians. This survival still persist in the minds of our Soviet officials, both central and local; it is entrenched in our state institutions, central and local; it is being reinforced by the "new," *Smena vekh*, Great-Russian chauvinist spirit, which is becoming stronger and stronger owing to the N.E.P. In practice it finds expression in an arrogantly disdainful and heartlessly bureaucratic attitude on the part of Russian Soviet officials towards the needs and requirements of the national republics. The multi-national Soviet state can become really durable, and the cooperation of the peoples within it really fraternal, only if this survival is vigorously and irrevocably eradicated from the practice of our state institutions. The situation in a number of national republics (Ukraine, Belorussia, Azerbaijan, Turkestan) is complicated by the fact that a significant part of the working class, which makes up the primary support for Soviet power, belongs to the Great Russian nationality. In these regions close relations between city and

countryside, working class and peasants, encounters the strongest obstacle in the survival of Great Russian chauvinism in both the Party and Soviet organs. In these conditions talk of the advantages of Russian culture and of promoting the inevitability of the victory of the higher Russian culture over the cultures of more backward peoples (Ukrainian, Azerbaijanian, Uzbek, Kirghiz, and other's, is nothing more than an attempt to strengthen the domination of the Great Russian nationality. Hence, the first immediate task of our Party is vigorously to combat the survival of Great-Russian chauvinism.

This heritage consists, secondly, in the actual, i.e., economic and cultural, inequality of the nationalities of the Union of Republics. The legal national equality won by the October Revolution is a great gain for the people, but it does not in itself solve the whole national problem. A number of republics and peoples, which have not gone through, or had scarcely entered, the stage of capitalism, which have no proletariat of their own, or scarcely any, and which are therefore backward economically and culturally, are incapable of making full use of the rights and opportunities afforded them by national equality of rights. They are incapable of rising to a higher level of development and thus catching up with the nationalities which have forged ahead unless they receive real and prolonged assistance from outside. The causes of this actual inequality lie not only in the history of these peoples, but also in the policy pursued by tsarism and the Russian bourgeoisie, which strove to convert the border regions into areas producing nothing but raw materials and exploited by the industrially developed central districts. This inequality cannot be removed in a short space of time, this heritage cannot be eliminated in a year or two. The Tenth Congress of our Party already pointed out that "the abolition of actual national inequality is a lengthy process involving a stubborn and persistent struggle against all survivals of national oppression and colonial slavery." But to overcome it is absolutely necessary. And it can be overcome only by the Russian proletariat rendering real and prolonged assistance to the backward people of the Union in their economic and cultural advancement. This assistance must first of all be expressed in a series of practical measures for the formation of industrial centers in the republics of the formerly oppressed nationalities, with the maximum recruitment from the local population. Finally, this assistance must proceed, in agreement with the resolution of the Tenth Congress, parallel with the struggle of the laboring masses against the efforts of the local and alien exploiting upper classes, which are being strengthened by NEP, to reinforce their own social position. In so far as these republics are in favored agricultural regions, internal social measures should first of all follow the path of allotting the laboring masses land from state resources. Otherwise there can be no grounds for expecting the establishment of proper and durable cooperation of the peoples within the framework of the single union state. Hence, the second immediate task of our Party lies in the struggle to abolish the actual inequality of the nationalities, the struggle to raise the cultural and economic level of the backward peoples.

This heritage consists, lastly, in the survival of nationalism among a number of nations which have born the heavy yoke of national oppression and have not yet managed to rid their minds of old national grievances. This survival finds practical expression in a certain national aloofness and the absence of full confidence of the formerly oppressed peoples in measures proceeding from the Russians. However, in some of the republics which consist of several nationalities, this defensive nationalism often becomes converted into aggressive nationalism, into blatant chauvinism on the part of a strong nationality directed against the weak nationalities of these republics. Georgian chauvinism (in Georgia) directed against the Armenians, Ossetians, Ajarians and Abkhazians; Azerbaijanian chauvinism (in Azerbaijan) directed against the Armenians; Uzbek chauvinism (in Bukhara and Khorezm) directed against the Turkmenians and Kirghiz; Armenian chauvinism and others—all these forms of chauvinism, which, moreover, are fostered by the conditions of the N.E.P. and by competition, are a grave evil which threatens to convert some of the national republics into

arenas of squabbling and bickering. Needless to say, all these phenomena hinder the actual union of the peoples into a single union state. In so far as the survival of nationalism is a distinctive form of defence against Great-Russian chauvinism, the surest means of overcoming it lies in a vigorous struggle against Great-Russian chauvinism. In so far, however, as these survivals become converted into local chauvinism directed against the weak national groups in individual republics, it is the duty of Party members to wage a direct struggle against these survivals. Thus, the third immediate task of our Party is to combat nationalist survival and, primarily, the chauvinist forms of these survivals.

8. We must regard as one of the clear expressions of the heritage of the past the fact that a considerable section of Soviet officials in the center and in the localities appraise the Union of Republics not as a union of state units with equal rights whose mission it is to guarantee the free development of the national republics, but as a step towards the liquidation of those republics, as the beginning of the formation of what is called the "one and indivisible."

The effort of some departments of the RSFSR to subordinate to themselves the independent commissariats of the autonomous republics and to pave the way for the liquidation of the latter can be considered one such a result of the old heritage.

Condemning this conception as anti-proletarian and reactionary, and proclaiming as absolutely necessary the existence and further development of the national republics, the Congress calls upon members of the Party vigilantly to see to it that the union of the republics and the merging of the commissariats are not utilized by chauvinistically-minded Soviet officials as a screen for their attempts to ignore the economic and cultural needs of the national republics. The merging of the commissariats is a test for the Soviet apparatus: if this experiment were in practice to assume a dominant nation tendency, the Party would be compelled to adopt the most resolute measures against such a distortion, even to the extent of raising the question of annulling the merging of certain Commissariats until such time as the Soviet apparatus has been properly re-trained, so that it will pay genuinely proletarian and genuinely fraternal attention to the needs and requirements of the small and backward nationalities.

9. The Union of Republics, created on the principles of equality and voluntary consent of the workers and peasants of the separate republics, represents the first effort of the proletariat in the matter of regulating the international mutual relations of independent countries and is the first step toward the creation of the future worldwide Soviet republic of labor. Since the Union of Republics is a new form of coexistence of peoples, a new form of their cooperation within a single union state, from which the survival described above must be eliminated in the course of the joint activities of the peoples, the supreme organs of the Union must be formed in such a way as fully to reflect not only the common needs and requirements of all the nationalities of the Union, but also the special needs and requirements of each individual nationality. Therefore, in addition to the existing central organs of the Union, which represent the laboring masses of the entire Union irrespective of nationality, a special organ should be created representing the nationalities on the basis of equality. Such a structure of the central organs of the Union would make it fully possible to lend an attentive ear to the needs and requirements of the peoples, to render them the necessary aid in good time, to create an atmosphere of complete mutual confidence, and thus eliminate the above-mentioned heritage in the most painless way.

10. On the basis of the above, the Congress recommends that the members of the Party secure the accomplishment of the following practical measures:

a) with the formation of central organs of the Union the equality of rights and duties of separate republics should be guaranteed, both in the mutual relations between them and in relation to the central organs of authority of the Union.

b) within the system of higher organs of the Union a special organ should be instituted that will represent all the national republics and national regions without exception on the

basis of equality, possibly including representation of all nationalities found within these republics;

c) the executive organs of the Union should be constructed on principles which insure the actual participation in them of representatives of the republics and the satisfaction of the needs and demands of the people's of the Union;

d) the republics should be provided sufficiently broad financial, and especially budget, rights to insure their ability to develop their own state-administrative, cultural and economic initiatives;

e) the organs of the national republics and regions should be staffed mainly with people from among the local inhabitants who know the language, manner of life, habits and customs of the peoples concerned;

f) special laws should be issued safeguarding the use of the native language in all government organs and in all institutions which serve the local national population and national minorities, laws which pursue and punish with all revolutionary severity all violations of national rights and especially the rights of national minorities;

g) educational work in the Red Army in the spirit of disseminating the idea of brotherhood and solidarity of the peoples of the Union should be strengthened, along with taking practical measures for the organization of national military units, with the observance of all measures necessary for insuring the full defense abilities of the republics.

## II

1. The development of our Party organizations in the majority of the national republics is proceeding under conditions not entirely favorable for their growth and consolidation. The economic backwardness of these republics, the small size of their national proletariat, the shortage, or even absence, of cadres of old Party workers belonging to the local population, the lack of serious Marxist literature in the native languages, the weakness of Party educational work, and, further, the presence of the survival of radical-nationalist traditions, which have not yet been completely effaced, have given rise among local Communists to a definite deviation towards overrating the specifically national features and underrating the class interests of the proletariat, to a deviation towards nationalism. This phenomenon is becoming particularly dangerous in republics where there are several nationalities, where, among the Communists of a stronger nationality, it frequently assumes the form of a deviation towards chauvinism directed against the Communists of the weak nationalities (Georgia, Azerbaijan, Bukhara, Khorezm). The deviation towards nationalism is harmful because, by hindering the process of liberation of the national proletariat from the ideological influence of the national bourgeoisie, it impedes the work of uniting the proletarians of the various nationalities into a single internationalist organization.

2. On the other hand, the presence both in the central Party institutions and in Communist Party organizations of the national republics of numerous cadres of old Party workers of Russian origin who are unfamiliar with the habits, customs and language of the laboring masses of these republics, and who for this reason are not always attentive to their requirements, has given rise in our Party to a deviation towards underrating the specifically national features and the national language in Party work, to an arrogant and disdainful attitude towards these specific features—a deviation towards Great-Russian chauvinism. This deviation is harmful, not only because by hindering the formation of Communist cadres from local inhabitants who know the national language it creates the danger that the Party may become isolated from the proletarian masses of the national republics, but also, and primarily, because it fosters and breeds the above-mentioned deviation towards nationalism and impedes the struggle against it.

3. Condemning both these deviations as harmful and dangerous to the cause of Communism, and drawing the attention of the Party members to the exceptional harmfulness and exceptional danger of the deviation towards Great-Russian chauvinism, the Congress calls upon the Party speedily to eliminate this survival of the past from our Party work.

The Congress instructs the Central Committee to carry out the following practical measures:

- a) to form advanced Marxist study circles among the local Party workers of the national republics;
- b) to develop a literature based on Marxist principles in the native languages;
- c) to strengthen the University of the Peoples of the East and its local branches;
- d) to establish under the Central Committees of the national Communist Parties groups of instructors recruited from among local Party workers;
- e) to develop a Party literature for the masses in the native languages;
- f) to intensify Party educational work in the republics;
- g) to intensify work among the youth in the republics.

4. In view of the importance of the activity of the responsible Party workers in the autonomous and independent republics and in the border regions generally (the contact of workers of the given republic with the workers of all other parts of the union), the Congress charges the Central Committee with a careful selection of these workers in order that the persons thus appointed may fully guarantee the actual execution of all decisions of the Party in matters concerning the nationality question.

*Kommunisticheskaia Partiia Sovetskogo Soiuzu v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh*, II: 433-443.



## THE BEST SOVIET TEACHERS

April-June 1923

*On 21 April 1923, the newspaper Pravda announced a competition encouraging readers to send in accounts of outstanding teachers. The following three examples were among those selected for publication in Pravda. The accounts show the type of teachers and kinds of schools the regime wished to hold up as models for others, and the values it wanted both to portray not only to students but to society as a whole. Prizes of clothing and books were announced for the best teachers and schools. For comparison, see the Pravda competition for accounts of best and worst factory administrators, in volume two of Documents.*

## TEACHERS IN RUSSIAN SCHOOLS

### A. P. Mikhailov

A. P. Mikhailov, teacher at a technical training center which has been renamed after Lenin, is of working class origin. He is a master locksmith and has been teaching at the center for about forty-one years. During these years he has turned out over 400 highly qualified locksmiths, and the fact of being able to quote Mikhailov as their teacher has always been and still is an unfailing recommendation for the best posts in the trade. Throughout the Republic the pupils who have passed through his hands can be found occupying the most responsible positions. A non-party man himself, he nevertheless felt the significance of the Revolution for the workers, and did not lose heart during the darkest days of hunger and cold. He remained at his post, trying to convince everyone he met of the importance of the training school. When he could not get all the materials he put his shoulder to the wheel himself, and with his own hands made in the school workshop a variety of goods for sale, thus obtaining the means to carry on. He is constantly devising ways and means to improve the school and its equipment, and thanks to his care it has not suffered much as a result of the war and revolution. Everything is in order, everything is spotlessly clean. The conditions with regard to health are excellent.

In the training center Mikhailov only teaches the scholars his craft, their general education being looked after in the children's home to which the center is attached. Although many of the youngsters who are sent to Mikhailov are considered defective, they almost invariably turn out excellent workmen after their four years' training. In addition, whilst teaching his pupils their trade, he also instills in his pupils conscientiousness, a love of work, accuracy, and self-discipline. They gain from his example something of the spirit of collectivism, of mutual help and fraternity.

The school renders constant help to the neighboring peasant population, providing them with threshers, harrows, and other agricultural implements.

It is remarkable that although Mikhailov is a non-party man himself, the majority of his present pupils are now members of the Young Communist League, while a very large proportion of those who worked under him in the past are members of the Communist Party. One of these past pupils, now president of the Vladimir Province trade union council, has rightly said: "It is my teacher, Comrade Mikhailov, whom I have to thank for my impulse to join the Communist Party. He did not teach us the theory of Communism, but he brought us up as honest, conscious workers with a love of work, and thereby made us good Communists."

### Nikolai Sergeevsky

"We can do it ourselves"—this is the watchword of our teacher Nikolai Sergeevsky. The whole school is organized on this principle of self-government, the teacher being only a sort of guiding force behind the scenes.

The school includes children from eight to eleven years old, and each year has its own committee to look after the discipline and order of its class. Once a week, on Thursday, the whole school holds a meeting, and a representative of each group gives a report on attendance, on the work of the various committees, special work with backward pupils, health and cleanliness of the school, the school library, and excursions and museum collections, etc. The editorial committee of the school journal also reports on its activities and on the policy and aims of the journal. A general discussion on any subject follows, skillfully but unobtrusively guided by the teacher. Adults present join in, putting questions to the teacher and scholars on points of general interest, such as methods of agriculture, the use of manures, and so on.

The school has never had, and still lacks, anything like a sufficient number of books, so we simply manage without—"we can do it ourselves" is brought into play. For instance the teacher suggests "bricks" as a subject for study. Scholars and teacher go off to the brickyard, and learn all they can about the methods of producing bricks, and where possible the children take a hand in the work themselves. Then at school the children write essays and discuss what they have seen. In the arithmetic lesson the pupils are asked to find out the number of bricks in their stoves at home from the size of the bricks and the size of the stove. In geometry, they learn about right angles, and in physics about the porosity and specific gravity of bricks. Bricks occupy a week, and are followed by, say, a barge, in connection with which the children learn all about the water, rivers, and so on. Then a couple of fish are caught and placed in a vessel for observation and a ten year old little fellow is assigned to see that the water is changed regularly. It is charming to hear how seriously he tells you: "First we are going to note the habits of the fish, then we shall cut them up and find out what is inside." The children love the school and often after school hours they come round the teacher: "Please, Nikolai Nikolaievitch, mayn't we stay another hour, we want to ask you lots of things." "Oh," answers the teacher jokingly, "your questions can wait till tomorrow, but the cabbage soup at home will get cold, so run along." The school also takes an active interest in the life of the country. Not only does it celebrate with gusto all revolutionary anniversaries, but it is always ready to render help in special national campaigns—only recently, the Young Communist League appealed for help for its unemployed young workers, and the school took up the idea and organized theatricals, from which they realized quite a respectable sum.

The peasants of the neighborhood are backward, but they are forced by the children themselves to send them regularly to school, and the school is doing much to enlighten them.

### Nadezhda I. Shikshaeva

Nadezhda I. Shikshaeva was born in 1883. Her father had been a teacher, and sent her to the Geneva University, where she graduated in history in 1906, and then came back to Russia to teach. At the present time she is headmistress of the First Tver School Commune, unquestionably the best in the province.

The children belong to the working and peasant classes, and are for the most part orphans. They are passionately attached to their principal, who in all her teaching endeavors to inculcate in them habits of self-discipline and love of work and knowledge.

The chief subjects of study at the school are the physical, natural, and social sciences, and labor—its theory and practice. All the children, particularly the older ones, have a general knowledge of the Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. and to a certain extent of the history of the working class movement in Russia.

Productive processes in school workshops are taught to girls and boys alike. The school, on the initiative of Shikshaeva, has been equipped with carpentry, locksmith, boot, and sewing workrooms in which the children make their own furniture, boots, and clothing. Sometimes they even execute orders for other children's institutions. Nor is agriculture neglected; here, too, theoretical instruction goes side by side with practical work. Thus in 1922 the school ploughed and sowed 21.6 acres providing a supply of food for the school almost for the whole of winter.

The studies of the children include singing, dramatic art, clay modelling, drawing, etc., all based on a study of the best masters, as well as practical work. Theatricals, concerts, whole children's operas are produced. Nearly all the children take part in these entertainments which have a tremendous success with the local population. So highly indeed does the latter value the school and its principal that very often at her request the local peasants and workers repair the school buildings, or do other work for the school free of charge.

The school takes an active part in all special campaigns and "weeks," in all anniversaries and revolutionary holidays. But N. I. Shikshaeva is not only an excellent and highly-esteemed teacher, she is also a keen public and social worker. Since 1918 she has taken a prominent part in the effort to stamp out illiteracy amongst the adult population; she belongs to the provincial educational committees and other local public bodies. Nor has her work passed without notice. In 1920 the Commissariat for Education registered the school as a model school, and the Tver county educational department conferred on N. I. Shikshaeva the honor of being recognized as a "Hero of Labor."

*Russian Information and Review*, II, nos. 31 and 37 (May 12 and June 23, 1923).



### THE CLOSING OF A MONASTERY

16 May 1923

*Closing of monasteries and churches was a part of the general anti-religious campaign. It was often pushed by local authorities, especially when the building, as here, could be put to other use. Newspapers regularly carried accounts of such closings. This is from Izvestiia, 16 May, 1923.*

*The Liquidation of the Monastery of the Nativity of Our Lord.*

The People's Court of the Sokolnik region has examined the claim of the Russian Sick and Wounded Red Army Committee of the Central Executive Committee regarding the expulsion of 96 nuns from the Monastery of the Nativity of Our Lord.

The All-Russian Sick and Wounded Red Army Committee closed a contract with the Moscow Administration of Nationalized Property regarding the lease of the Monastery of the Nativity of Our Lord with all its buildings. Part of the buildings were used as workshops for the invalids, but in other buildings the nuns remained, who did not want to quit their old premises, although they did not have any contracts and, besides, paid the rent rather regularly. Their houses were intended as houses for the invalids, who were working there in the workshops.

The plaintiff withdrew at the court his demand to turn out 18 nuns of advanced age, but insisted on turning out the remaining ones.

The court gave satisfaction to the demands of the plaintiff.

Szczesniak, 159-60.



## THE ANTI-RELIGIOUS CAMPAIGN: "THE RELIGIOUS FOOLISHNESS."

25 May 1923

*One of the most common forms of anti-religious propaganda was accounts of how priests were out-argued and made to look foolish by stalwart young Communists, frequently workers. This account is a good example of this genre. It also highlights the regime's concern with the Baptists and other non-Orthodox religious groups, who were in many ways more difficult to control because formal church buildings and ceremonies were less central to their functioning. This was published in Pravda, 25 May 1923.*

*The Religious Foolishness*

The Baptists had come to the village not long before the Revolution. Aunt Afinia had sent her three maiden daughters to the big town for service in the houses of rich Baptists, and three years later they had come back to the village as "believers." Nor was that all. The three sisters succeeded in converting to the Baptist religion their mother, brother, uncle and other members of the family. There were three such "believers' homes" in the village.

Soon, preachers of the Gospel began to come to the village, arranging meetings, propagating their faith among the peasants, and trying to persuade them to "acknowledge faith in Christ." The conditions were favorable, with the church crumbling on its foundations and the authorities not desiring to mix in religious matters, and the preachers made the most of the opportunity.

"Repent and come to Jesus: Faith alone will save you! Faith alone will redeem you, brothers and sisters."

They were well fed, well and even fashionably clothed, young, wearing on their hands gold and diamonds. They used to come to the village only when the three sisters happened to be at home.

The country women began to mock at it.

"By all the Saints, it's not for the old that they come; it's the young girls."

Even the old women began to be discontented.



"It's nice work, however, they are doing in our village, these rascals."

The village youths, also, frequented these religious meetings, indulging in disputes with the preachers, who, however, always proved to be stronger in their arguments, owing to an ever ready flow of expressions and their ability to turn the questions. But the youths did not much mind being vanquished. They knew their turn would come when a certain Zarubin, a native of the village, and now working in a factory, came back to the village.

The village knew him well, this Zarubin; the whole village felt obligated to him. He had done very much for the peasants, and whenever trouble arose, the peasants were sure to have his support. He had interfered in quarrels about the distribution of land, school matters were promptly decided by him, and even the church had to feel his authority. Popes and the so-called "kulaki" of the village [rich people] had seen a thing or two. His good turns to the village were innumerable, and no wonder his authority was universally recognized and his opinion respected.

At the time of the emperor Nicholas he had worked in more than one factory, had been put into prison for striking, and been brought many times back to his home under escort. Working now in a neighborhood factory, he often comes home to see his old father, in summer. He knows absolutely everything, foreign countries, the food-tax regulations, why the Soviet regime is better than all other forms of governments; he is versed in religious matters as well, and the popes did not like him much. Briefly, he knows all, explains and promptly settles all matters.

Those who did not like him used to call him: "Whirl, Gavrila" [Kruti Gavrila].

And Zarubin came to visit his sick father, again, and by chance, he arrived the day when our preachers from the big town were present in the village and had just arranged a meeting, for the same evening. They had chosen that day the largest room in the village, the schoolhouse, in order to have more comfort.

Youth came in masses to the assembly. Every one instinctively felt that the decisive moment had come. Long rows of peasants, women, children, and girls were to be seen coming slowly, as peasants do, to the school, and even the worn out and disabled old Sema left his hot corner on the stove bunk. No room at all in the school, nowhere to sit down, to stand up, even the windows did not give fresh air. A throng in the room, near the window, in the streets, a throng everywhere. Well seen by everybody, and ranged according to rank, our Gospel messengers were seated at a large table, where an imposing heap of books was lying. A polished young man, with black moustache and careful part of the hair, making large gestures, was talking with a high, shrill, noisy voice. He was repeating again and again the same thing, Faith in Christ.

Having finished, he invited the audience, his brothers and sisters in God, to ask questions.

"With your permission!" said Zarubin, stepping forward.

The crowd gave way and he came to the table.

Zarubin talked clearly, putting the stress where necessary, underlining cleverly the significance of certain phrases, pausing at moments.

"You come to tell us that all the wrong in this world, all the vices, everything is to be corrected through Faith. You have blamed the non-believers in your faith for rudeness, ignorance. You pretend to make the world happy only through your faith. But, culture, knowledge, do they mean nothing to you? Have they lost all significance? Do they not correct, do they not improve the life of mankind?"

The preacher realized immediately with whom he had to do, and tried to interrupt him.

"We are talking in different languages, brother," he said.

"I have understood you very well, and you have me," Zarubin said, and continued:

"I know, you do not believe in your teaching yourself. Nonsense, all that. Cultured mankind will know without your faith that it has not to do wrong. All that heap of books

on the table is not worth a single scientific treatise. You have been saying a lot about humility and love. We know what these phrases mean. Look how the capitalists, belonging to your own faith, exploit us workers. Big houses are built with the profits they get from our work, high walls surround their mansions, and cruel dogs watch them. They watch their property. Humility is only asked of us. Your faith is only to hide the sharp teeth of these ever hungry wolves."

The crowd was listening, holding its breath. Somebody said: "Bravo, Alekha! Go on!"

And Zarubin continued to talk at some length. He mentioned the behavior of the Baptists during the Civil War when they came to the authorities to entreat them to exempt them from military service and from participation in the Civil War.

Is it not however only owing to our victory that the Baptists can exercise their religious rites and profess their faith unmolested?"

Red as a turkey, our preacher, excited and gesticulating, cried:

"We will never understand each other, our discussion is absolutely useless."

But Zarubin, turning to the peasants, continued and said:

"Peasants! How many hundreds of years have people used their brains and their energy to study the bibles, psalters and ancient books! How many faiths there are! Each of them tries to seduce and to attract people to come to their little church shops, each of them praises its produce, as the Baptists here in our village are now doing. But this produce is rotten, it putrefies. For us workers, religion, whatever it may be, is nonsense and useless.

"Drive them away, rather; they prevent us from living sensibly. Let them work, these preachers, these popes and all that sort of people. Close up the chapels, the churches, the synagogues! It was time long ago."

The peasants did not disperse for a long time. They discussed the meeting at some length, this day being a very important one in their lives. And even the religious peasants approved Alekha, wondering how easy it was for Zarubin to settle matters.

After this memorable day our preachers have never come back to the village! They disappeared entirely. They are frightened.

Szczesniak, 161-64.



## IMPLEMENTING THE NEW NATIONALITY POLICY

12 June 1923

*See introduction to the Resolution on the Nationality Question, 25 April, above. The Central Committee addressed the practical problem of implementing the resolution of the Twelfth Party Congress. It focused especially on measures to draw members of the local national population into the Party, on combating national chauvinism, and on the structure of those central organs which represented people by nationality. The resolution was prepared by Stalin and approved with a few changes.*

### PRACTICAL MEASURES FOR CARRYING INTO EFFECT THE RESOLUTION OF THE XII CONGRESS OF THE PARTY ON THE NATIONALITY QUESTION

#### 1. The General Line of Party on the National Question

The line of Party work on the national question with regard to combating deviations from the position adopted by the Twelfth Party Congress must be defined by the relevant points

of the resolution on the national question adopted by that Congress, namely, Point 7 of Part I of the resolution, and Points 1, 2 and 3 of Part II.

One of the Party's fundamental tasks is to rear and develop in the national republics and regions young Communist organizations consisting of proletarian and semi-proletarian elements of the local population, and to do everything to assist these organizations to stand firmly on their feet, to acquire real Communist education and to unite the genuinely internationalist Communist cadres, even though they may be few at first. The Soviet regime will be strong in the republics and regions only when really serious Communist organizations are firmly established there.

But the Communists themselves in the republics and regions must bear in mind that the situation there, if only because of the different social composition of the population, is markedly different from the situation in the industrial centers of the Union of Republics and that, for this reason, it is often necessary to employ different methods of work in the border regions.

The weakness, or almost complete absence, of modern industry and the inescapable slowness in developing industry in the near future, necessarily shifts Party work in the direction of slow, systematic, patient ideological-educational work among the best elements of the peasantry, handicraft workers and others. It is necessary to remember that in the backward republics and regions only our Party organization opens up for certain lower elements—sincerely revolutionary but insufficiently developed and hardened—the possibility gradually to develop into complete Communists. The mechanical transference here of that class revolutionary criterion which arose on the basis of the experience of the proletarian centers would be fundamentally incorrect and would lead to directly opposite result than that desired, which is that the core of the RKP be made up of hardened workers from industrial centers, permitting the Party, without danger to its own class character, to follow the aforementioned path of patient ideological-educational work.

Comrades from the center who participate in Party work among the more backward peoples must carefully maintain a tone of cooperation and assistance to the advanced national elements in their Communist and Soviet work, and not in any case allowing either in action or in speech anything that would appear to be conferring on oneself the right to dictate and to decide, to admit or to sweep aside, in general to be the boss, while formally leaning on the authority of the center.

In particular, here, in the endeavor to win the support of the laboring masses of the local population, it is necessary to a larger extent than in the central regions to meet halfway the revolutionary democratic elements, or even those who are simply loyal in their attitude to the Soviet regime. The role of the local intelligentsia in the republics and regions differs in many respects from that of the intelligentsia in the central regions of the Union of Republics. There are so few local intellectual workers in the border regions that all efforts must be made to win every one of them to the side of the Soviet regime.

A Communist in the border regions must remember that he is a Communist and therefore, acting in conformity with the local conditions, must make concessions to those local national elements who are willing and able to work loyally within the framework of the Soviet system. This does not preclude but, on the contrary, presupposes a systematic ideological struggle for the principles of Marxism and for genuine internationalism, and against a deviation towards nationalism. Only in this way will it be possible successfully to eliminate local nationalism and win broad strata of the local population to the side of the Soviet regime.

## II. Questions Connected with the Institution of a Second Chamber of the Central Executive Committee of the Union and with the Organization of the People's Commissariats of the Union of Republics

a) *The composition of the second chamber.* This chamber must consist of representatives of the autonomous and independent republics (four or more from each) and of representatives of the national regions (one from each will be enough). It is desirable that

matters be arranged in such a way that members of the first chamber should not, as a rule, be at the same time members of the second chamber. The representatives of the republics and regions must be endorsed by the Congress of Soviets of the Union of Republics. The first chamber should be called the Union Soviet, the second—the Soviet of Nationalities.

b) *The Rights of the second chamber in relation to the first.* The two chambers should have equal rights, each having power to initiate legislation, with the proviso that no Bill introduced in either of the chambers can become law unless it receives the consent of both chambers, voting separately. In the event of disagreement, the questions in dispute should be referred to a conciliation commission of the two chambers, and if no agreement is reached they should be put to another vote at a joint sitting of the two chambers. If the disputed Bill thus amended fails to obtain a majority of the two chambers, the matter should be referred to a special or to an ordinary Congress of Soviets of the Union of Republics.

c) *The jurisdiction of the second chamber.* The questions to come within the jurisdiction of the second (as of the first) chamber are indicated in Point 1 of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. The legislative functions of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union and of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union are to remain in force.

d) *The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Republics.* There should be one Presidium of the Central Executive Committee. It should be elected by both chambers of the Central Executive Committee, provision being made, of course, for representation of the nationalities, at least for the largest ones. The proposal of the Ukrainians for setting up two presidiums with legislative functions, one for each chamber of the Central Executive Committee, in place of a single Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union, is inadvisable. The Presidium is the supreme authority in the Union, functioning constantly, continuously, from session to session. The formation of two presidiums with legislative functions would mean a divided supreme authority, and this would inevitably create great difficulties in practice. The chambers should have their presidiums, which, however, should not possess legislative functions.

e) *The number of merged Commissariats.* In conformity with the decisions of previous plenums of the Central Committee, there should be five *merged* Commissariats (Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, War, Transport, and Posts and Telegraphs), and also five *directive* Commissariats (People's Commissariat of Finance, Supreme Council of National Economy, People's Commissariat of Food, People's Commissariat of Labor, Workers' and Peasants' Inspection), the rest of the Commissariats should be quite autonomous. The Ukrainians propose that the Commissariats of Foreign Affairs and of Foreign Trade be transferred from the merged to the directive category, i.e., that these Commissariats be left in the republics parallel with the Union Commissariats of Foreign Affairs and of Foreign Trade, but subordinate to their directives. This proposal cannot be accepted, if we are really going to form a single Union State capable of coming before the outside world as a united whole. The same must be said about concession agreements, the conclusion of which must be concentrated in the Union of Republics.

f) *The structure of the People's Commissariats of the Union of Republics.* The collegiums of these People's Commissariats should be enlarged by the inclusion of representatives of the biggest and most important nationalities.

g) *The budget rights of the republics.* The republics should be given more independence in regard to their budgets, within the limits of the share allotted to them, the dimensions of the share to be specially determined.

### III. Measures for Drawing Working People of the Local Population into Party and Soviet Affairs

a) To purge the state and Party apparatuses of nationalist elements (this refers primarily to the Great-Russian nationalists, but it also refers to the anti-Russian and other nationalists). The purge must be carried out with caution, on the basis of proved data, under the control of the Central Committee of the Party;

b) to conduct systematic and persevering work to make the state and Party institutions in the republics and regions national in character, i.e., gradually to introduce the local languages in the conduct of affairs, making it obligatory for responsible workers to learn the local languages. The systematic involvement of national elements in professional and co-operative organizations;

c) to choose and enlist for the Soviet institutions the more or less loyal elements among the local intelligentsia. At the same time our responsible workers in the republics and regions must train cadres of Soviet and Party officials from among the members of the Party;

d) to arrange non-Party conferences of workers and peasants at which People's Commissars, and responsible Party workers in general, should report on the most important measures taken by the Soviet Government.

#### IV. Measures to Raise the Cultural Level of the Local Population

a) To organize clubs (non-Party) and other educational institutions to be conducted in the local languages;

b) to enlarge the network of educational institutions of all grades to be conducted in the local languages;

c) to draw into school work the more or less loyal school-teachers of local origin;

d) to create a network of societies for the dissemination of literacy in the local languages;

e) to organize publishing activity, to create a special subsidy fund at the Central Committee for republics and regions;

f) to include in the general government budget schools at the first level for culturally backward nationalities

#### V. Economic Construction in the National Republics and Regions from the Standpoint of their Specific National Features and of Their Manner of Life

a) To regulate and, where necessary, to stop the movement of populations;

b) as far as possible to provide land for the local working population out of the state land fund;

c) to make agricultural credit available to the local population;

d) to expand irrigation work;

e) to give the co-operatives, and especially the producers' co-operatives, all possible assistance (with a view to attracting handicraftsmen);

f) to transfer factories and mills to republics in which suitable raw materials abound;

g) to organize trade and technical schools for the local population;

h) to organize agricultural courses for the local population.

#### VI. Practical Measures for the Organization of National Military Units

It is necessary to proceed at once with the organization of military schools in the republics and regions for the purpose of training within a certain time commanders from among the local people who could later serve as a core for the organization of national military units. It goes without saying that a satisfactory Party and social composition of these national units, particularly of the commanders, must be ensured. Where there are old military cadres among the local people (Tataria, and, partly, Bashkiria), it would be possible to organize regiments of national militia at once. Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan already have, apparently, a division each. In the Ukraine and in Byelorussia it would be possible, at once, to form one division of militia in each (particularly in the Ukraine).

The question of forming national military units is one of prime importance, both as regards defence against possible attacks by Turkey, Afghanistan, Poland, etc., and as regards the possibility of the Union of Republics being compelled to take action against neighboring states. The importance of national military units from the standpoint of the

internal situation in the Union of Republics needs no proof. It must be supposed that in this connection the numerical strength of our army will have to be increased by approximately 20-25 thousand men.

#### VII. The Organization of Party Educational Work

- a) To organize schools for elementary political education in the native languages;
- b) to create a Marxist literature in the native languages;
- c) to have a well-organized periodical press in the native languages;
- d) to widen the activities of the University of the Peoples of the East at the center and in the localities and to provide this university with the necessary funds;
- e) to organize a Party debating society at the University of the Peoples of the East, and to enlist the cooperation of members of the Central Committee living in Moscow;
- f) to intensify work in the Youth League and among women in the republics and regions.

#### VIII. Selection of Party and Soviet Officials with a View to Implementing the Resolution on the National Question Adopted by the Twelfth Congress

It is necessary to bring a definite number of people (two or three in each) from the nationalities into the Registration and Distribution, Agitation and Propaganda, Organization, Women's, and Instructors' Departments of the Central Committee, in order to facilitate the Central Committee's current Party work in the border regions and properly to distribute Party and Soviet officials among the republics and regions so as to ensure the implementation of the line on the national question adopted by the Twelfth Congress of the RKP. It is necessary, moreover, to allow some digression from the accepted norm, which can facilitate the entry into the Party and the movement into the directing organs of the Party of local proletarian and semi-proletarian elements of the national republics and regions.

*Kommunisticheskaia Partiia Sovetskogo Soiuz v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh*, II: 488-495.



#### A PUBLIC DISPUTATION OF FUTURISM AND THE ARTS

July 1923

*Various persons wrote articles about what the arts should be and their role in the new society, and arts groups issued their manifestos and declarations. This article is different, providing instead an account of a public disputation of the subject, focused particularly on Futurism and on the LEF group, (although the author clearly was hostile to Futurism). The account was written by Frida Rubiner, who contributed numerous articles to International Press Correspondence on cultural and social affairs in Soviet Russia. Rubiner errs in saying LEF means "lion" in Russia; she confused it with the similar sounding word "lev."*

Frida Rubiner

*A Public Disputation on Futurism*

Moscow, July 1923

Great posters on the walls announce: In the Great Hall of the Conservatorium, under the presidency of the People's Commissar A. Lunacharsky — Public discussion LEF. What is LEF? "LEF," means "lion" in Russian. But what does this false "lion," the LEF, mean? In

Russia the abbreviation of names to their initial letter has become so customary that everyone can understand; "LEF" means "Levi-Front," of the "Left Front," and for some months they have been publishing a periodical under the name of the "LEF" edited by the well known Mayakovsky and his colleagues.

Even before the revolution Russia provided a field for the most variegated forms of art, bearing the most impossible names: Imagists, Egoists, and even Nichevoki (from the Russian "Nichevo," meaning indifference). During the years of revolution these art tendencies contrived to eke out a more or less wretched existence in wretchedly heated rooms. But when the Soviet power was finally stabilized, fresh life began to pervade the world of art. Not to mention the poets and minor poets who help the NEP people to pass their time pleasantly in the cabarets and cafes of the Tverskaya in Moscow, modern poetry, and above all futurism is striving to win the hearts and minds of the Russian youth, that youth which is being educated in the spirit of Marxism to be good proletarian revolutionaries in the Sverdlov universities and labor faculties. Youth, including proletarian youth, is accessible to every good or evil influence, and it listens eagerly to the strident cantons of the futurists, which sound so attractively venturesome and "revolutionary." Does this interest in futurism not form a danger for revolutionary ideology, for the proletarian youth? The question between futurists and Marxists, proletarian writers and bourgeois poets, experts and casual public, is here to be thrashed out publicly.

Not only is the great hall of the conservatorium filled to bursting, but there are still hundreds shouting and singing outside, hoping to obtain admittance. What sections of the public are interested in futurism? First of all, the youth: proletarian, proletarianized, semi-proletarian, would-be proletarian, and would-look proletarian; next—soldiers of the Red Army, young men belonging to the world of artists, elegant young ladies with carefully tinted lips; further—NEP people who do not want to miss anything, and finally—good solid Party comrades with an old Party past, who take the matter seriously.

The meeting begins two hours after the time fixed. Many of the invited guests are missing: the futurists' chieftain Mayakovsky has just fled to Berlin. The theoretical leader (as the meeting is informed by a disciple) has just been taken to a lunatic asylum a few hours earlier. This piece of information causes one section of the audience to break into peals of laughter, whilst another section hisses indignantly and applauds. Altogether there is a frightful amount of hand-clapping, shouting, and interrupting in the overheated hall.

The discussion begins with a recital of the futurist creed by a disciple who explains at length what futurism is and what it wants to be. It would go beyond the scope of this article to enter into the essential character of futurism. But as a social phenomenon it must be emphasized that even at this literary discussion those taking part consider it necessary to emphasize the assertion that they are, above all, adherents of Communism and of the Revolution. It is a well known fact that in Italy the drummer-boy of futurism, Marinetti, has gone over to the Fascists with his disciples; in Russia the futurists are Communists and emphasize this fact themselves. Why? One of the debaters declared candidly: the futurists are in favor of power, no matter whether Red or White power! No program is discussed, for what program can a literary group draw up? To one member of the group the whole question is a matter of the studio, to another it is a question of obtaining domination over the minds of others. One of the leading Russian futurists, a real and by no means insignificant power, the gifted Tredyakov, is the only representative of the group really capable of stating anything definite on the aims which it pursues. He speaks quite in the jargon of present day Russia and calls the work of the poet and writer "production"—he produces influence on the state of mind of the reader. But if the attempt is made to convert Tredyakov's beautifully turned sentences into the language of the pamphlet, the result is next to nothing. But the opponents of futurism, from various camps, are not capable of much more either. Every speaker expounds his own program and his own views with all the individualism and boastfulness of the author and intellectual. Each speaker is enthusiastically applauded by one part of the audience and opposed with equal energy by the other.

The question arises: what is the attitude of the proletariat to this current of art? There are rumors among the audience that in one factory the workers read only the "LEF." Who can test this assertion? A star turn is then given by the futurists to a real worker, a living proletarian, who delivers a speech in favor of futurism. The futurists are reproached with writing incomprehensibly; that does not matter, says this worker. After we have taken the trouble to grasp what they intend to say, we are rewarded by a feeling of satisfaction similar to that felt in production when we have accomplished something.

Although the discussion lasts for many hours, it gets no further. Comrade Meshcheryakov, the leader of the state publishing establishment, where the "LEF" is published, adopts a purely liberal standpoint—that a publishing enterprise must accommodate every art tendency. He himself is opposed to the futurists, but he publishes their productions in order that they may seal their own fate. Meshcheryakov develops the theory that proletarian culture is really an impossibility, for when the proletariat has reached a point at which it is able to produce art, then it will cease to be a proletariat—a truly remarkable point of view.

One thing is certain: our tried and tested comrades, who have the question of ideology very much at heart, do not know how to deal with such phenomena as this "LEF" and its supporters. The means of propaganda, literature, and art, employed in the period before the Revolution to awaken the masses, are now no longer suitable for the accomplishment of the next step, for the proletariat, having seized power, must now move forward to cultural and economic reconstruction. It is easy for the comrades to believe they can dispose of all the devils for futurism with a few sharp phrases. Whether these futurists are merely running a "stunt" or whether they are really sincerely striving after new forms and modes of expression, is beside the question. It is certain that the revolutionary Russian youth, even a part of that youth which passed through the fire of civil war, is now interested in, even enthusiastic, about such questions. This is easily comprehensible; the fighting has ceased, and in periods following such acute struggles there is always a certain reaction. In periods whose tasks are of a peaceful nature there is bound to be a keener search after new tendencies in art and culture.

But it is equally certain that this "LEF" has nothing whatever to do with Communism and proletarian ideology. There is a contradiction in the fact that Comrade Lunacharsky, the tried Marxist and revolutionary champion, should take this "LEF" under his high protection even whilst criticizing it, for the "LEF" contradicts the spirit of the Communist Party of Russia, the creative and constructive spirit of Soviet Russia.

There are increasing signs that the fight along ideological lines, the question of culture, will soon become one of the most urgent tasks of the Communist Party of Russia.

*International Press Correspondence*, III, no. 55 (9 August 1923), 596-97.



#### THE FAMINE: RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR THE AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

10 July 1923

*By 1923 the famine which had ravaged Russia (see volume two of Documents of Soviet History) had receded. The work of the American Relief Association (ARA), which played a major role in providing famine relief and saving lives estimated in the millions, came to an*



*end. The Soviet government passed this resolution of appreciation, which was presented as an elaborately engraved, hand-printed, document. The famine relief activities of the United States and other Western countries were soon expunged from Soviet histories of the era.*

#### RESOLUTION OF THE SOVIET OF PEOPLES COMMISSARS

In the trying hour of a great and overwhelming disaster, the people of the United States, represented by the A.R.A., responded to the needs of the population, already exhausted by intervention and blockade, in the famine stricken parts of Russia and Federated Republics.

Unselfishly, the A.R.A. came to the aid of the people and organized on a broad scale the supply and distribution of food products and other articles of prime necessity.

Due to the enormous and entirely disinterested efforts of the A.R.A., millions of people of all ages were saved from death, and entire districts and even cities were saved from the horrible catastrophe which threatened them.

Now when the famine is over and the colossal work of the A.R.A. comes to a close, the Soviet of Peoples' Commissars, in the name of the millions of people saved and in the name of all the working people of Soviet Russia and the Federated Republics counts it a duty to express before the whole world its deepest thanks to this organization, to its leader, Herbert Hoover, to its representative in Russia, Colonel Haskell, and to all its workers, and to declare that the people inhabiting the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will never forget the help given them by the American people, through the A.R.A., seeing it a pledge of the future friendship of the two nations.

L. Kamenev,

Acting President of the Council of Peoples Commissars

N. Gorbunov,

Chief of the Administrative Dept. of the Council of Peoples Commissars

L. Fotieva,

Secretary of the Council of Peoples Commissars.

Moscow, Kremlin,  
July 10, 1923

H. H. Fisher, *The Famine in Soviet Russia, 1919-1923. The Operations of the American Relief Administration*. Hoover War Library Publications, No. 9 (Stanford, 1935): 398.



#### TROTSKY ON CULTURE AND PROBLEMS OF LIFE

10 July 1923

*In early 1923 Trotsky turned his attention to a broad range of cultural and social issues, writing widely on the subject. He published an especially important series of articles on these themes in July in the central Communist Party newspaper, Pravda, after some meetings by Trotsky with Communist Party propagandists in Moscow about these subjects. Nine of these articles were then collected and published as a book in 1924 under the title Problems of Life. The major theme was well expressed in his first article in the series, "Not by Politics Alone Does Man Thrive." Here he picked up on a theme found frequently in Lenin's writings (and, one might argue, in Russian thought back to the time of Peter the Great in the early 18th century) about the need for Russians to acquire a new type of "culture." For Trotsky, as for*

*Lenin and many others, this meant first and foremost "to work efficiently: accurately, punctually, economically." People would have to learn to use training manuals and technical equipment. The leading role in this cultural transformation would, of course, be taken by the Communist Party: "The party will concentrate its activity on the work for culture, and take the leading part in this work...."*

Leon Trotsky

*Not By Politics Alone Does Man Thrive*

This simple thought should be thoroughly grasped and borne in mind by all who speak or write for propaganda purposes. Changed times bring changed tunes. The pre-revolutionary history of our party was a history of revolutionary politics. Party literature, party organizations—everything was ruled by politics in the direct and narrow sense of that word. The revolutionary crisis has intensified political interests and problems to a still greater degree. The Party had to win over the most politically active elements of the working class. At present the working class is perfectly aware of the *fundamental* results of the Revolution. It is quite unnecessary to go on repeating over and over the story of these results. It does not any longer stir the minds of the workers, and is more likely even to wipe out in the workers' minds the lessons of the past. With the conquest of power and its consolidation as a result of the Civil War, our chief problems have shifted to the needs of culture and economic reconstruction. They have become more complicated, more detailed and in a way more prosaic. Yet, in order to justify all the past struggle and all the sacrifices, we must learn to grasp these fragmentary problems of culture, and solve each of them separately.

Now, what has the working class actually gained and secured for itself as a result of the revolution?

1. The dictatorship of the proletariat (represented by the workers' and peasants' government under the leadership of the Communist Party).
2. The Red Army—a firm support of the dictatorship of the proletariat.
3. The nationalization of the chief means of production, without which the dictatorship of the proletariat would have become a form void of substance.
4. The monopoly of foreign trade, which is the necessary condition of socialist state structure in a capitalistic environment.

The four things, definitely won, form the steel frame of all our work; and every success we achieve in economics or culture—provided it is a real achievement and not a sham—becomes in this framework a necessary part of the socialist structure.

And what is our problem now? What have we to learn in the first place? What should we strive for? We must learn to work efficiently: accurately, punctually, economically. We need culture in work, culture in life, in the conditions of life. After a long preliminary period of struggle we have succeeded in overthrowing the rule of the exploiters by armed revolt. No such means exists, however, to create culture all at once. The working class must undergo a long process of self-education, and so must the peasantry, either along with the workers or following them. Lenin speaks about this shift of focus of our aims and efforts in his article on cooperation:

We have to admit [he says] that there has been a radical modification in our whole outlook on socialism. The radical modification is this: formerly we placed, and had to place, the main emphasis on the political struggle, on revolution, on winning political power, etc. Now the emphasis is changing and shifting to peaceful, organizational, "cultural" work. I should say that emphasis is shifting to educational work, were it not for our international relations, were it not for the fact that we have to fight for our position on a world scale. If we leave that aside, however, and confine ourselves to internal economic relations, the emphasis in our work is certainly shifting to education.

I consider it of some interest to quote here a passage on the epoch of the struggle for culture, out of my *Thoughts about the Party*. [March 13, 1923—ed.]

In its practical realization, the revolution is, so to speak, "broken up" into partial tasks: it is necessary to repair bridges, learn to read and write, reduce the cost of production of shoes in Soviet factories, combat filth, catch swindlers, extend power cables into the countryside, and so on. Some vulgarians from the intelligentsia, from the category of persons who wear their brains askew (for that very reason they consider themselves poets or philosophers), have already taken to talking about the revolution in a tone of the most magnificent condescension: learning to trade, ha, ha! and to sew on buttons, heh, heh! But let these windbags yelp into the empty air....

But purely practical everyday work in the field of Soviet cultural and economic construction (even in Soviet retail trade) is not at all a practice of "petty jobs," and does not necessarily involve a hairsplitting mentality. There are plenty of petty jobs, unrelated to any big jobs, in man's life. But history knows of no big jobs without petty jobs. It would be more precise to say—petty jobs in a great epoch, that is, as component parts of a big task, cease to be "petty jobs."

...It is perfectly obvious that it is quite a different sort of topical demands and partial tasks that call for our attention today. Our concern is with the constructive work of a working class which is for the first time building for itself and according to its own plan. This historic plan, though as yet extremely imperfect and lacking in consistency, must embrace all sections and parts of the work, all its nooks and crannies, to the unity of a great creative conception....

Socialist construction is planned construction on the largest scale. And through all the ebbs and flows, mistakes and turns, through all the twists and turns of NEP, the party pursues in great plan, educates the youth in the spirit of this plan, teaches everyone to link his particular function with the common task, which today demands sewing on Soviet button, and tomorrow readiness to die fearlessly under the banner of Communism....

We must, and shall, demand serious and thorough specialized training for our young people, and so, their emancipation from the basic sin of our generation—that of being know-it-alls and jack of all trades—but specialization in the service of a common plan grasped and thought out by every individual....

Nothing, therefore, but the problems of our international position keeps us, as Lenin tells us, from the struggle for culture. Now these problems, as we shall see presently, are not altogether of a different order. Our international position largely depends on the strength of our self-defense—that is to say, on the efficiency of the Red Army—and, in this vital aspect of our existence as a state, our problem consists almost entirely of work for culture: we must raise the level of the army and teach every single soldier to read and to write. The men must be taught to read books, to use manuals and maps; they must acquire habits of tidiness, punctuality, and thrift. It cannot be done all at once by some miraculous means. After the Civil War and during the transitional period of our work, attempts were made to save the situation by a specially invented "proletarian military doctrine," but it was quite lacking in any real understanding of our actual problems. The same thing happened in regard to the ambitious plan for creating an artificial "proletarian culture." All such quests for the philosophers' stone combine despair at our deficiency in culture with a faith in miracles. We have, however, no reason to despair, and as to miracles and childish quackeries like "proletarian culture" or "proletarian military doctrine," it is high time to give such things up. We must see to the development of culture within the framework of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and this alone can assure the socialist content of the revolutionary part in the development of party thought and party work.

When Lenin says that at the present moment our work is less concerned with politics than with culture, we must be quite clear about the terms he uses, so as not to misinterpret his meaning. In a certain sense politics always ranks first. Even the advice of Lenin to shift

our interests from politics to culture is a piece of political advice. When the labor party of a country comes to decide that at some given moment the economic problems and not the political should take first place, the decision itself is political. It is quite obvious that the word "politics" is used here in two different meanings: firstly, in a wide materialist and dialectical sense, as the totality of all guiding principles, methods, systems that determine collective activities in all domains of public life; and, on the other hand, in a restricted sense, specifying a definite part of public activity, directly concerned with the struggle for power and opposed to economic work, to the struggle for culture, etc. Speaking of politics as concentrated economics, Lenin meant politics in the wider philosophic sense. But when he urged: "Let us have less politics and more economics," he referred to politics to the restricted and special sense. Both ways of using the word are sanctioned by tradition and are justified.

The Communist Party is political in the wide historical or, we may also say, philosophic sense. The other parties are political only in the restricted sense of the word. The shifting of the interests of our Party to the struggle for *culture* does not therefore weaken the *political* importance of the Party. The party will concentrate its activity on the work for culture, and take the leading part in this work—this will constitute its historically leading, i.e., political part. A great many more years of socialist work, successful within and secure from without, are still needed before the Party could do away with its shell of party structure and dissolve in a socialist community. This is still so very distant that it is of no use to look so far ahead. In the immediate future the Party must preserve in full its fundamental characteristics: unity of purpose, centralization, discipline, and, as a result of it, fitness for the fight. But under present conditions it needs a very sound economic base to preserve and to develop these priceless assets of Communist Party spirit. Economic problems, therefore, rank first in our politics, and only in conformity with them does the party concentrate and distribute its forces and educate the young generation. In other words, politics in the broader sense requires that all the work of propaganda, distribution of forces, teaching, and education should be based at present on the problems of economics and culture, and not on politics in the restricted and special sense of the word.

The proletariat is a powerful social unity which manifests its strength fully during the periods of intense revolutionary struggle for the aims of the whole class. But within this unity we observe a great variety of types. Between the obtuse illiterate village shepherd and the highly qualified engine-driver there lie a great many different states of culture and habits of life. Every class, moreover, every trade, every group consists of people of different ages, different temperaments, and with a different past. But for this variety, the work of the Communist Party might have been easy. The example of Western Europe shows, however, how difficult this work is in reality.

One might say that the richer the history of a country, and at the same time of its working class, the greater within it the accumulation of memories, traditions, habits, the larger the number of old groupings—the harder it is to achieve a revolutionary unity of the working class. The Russian proletariat is poor in class history and class traditions. This has undoubtedly facilitated its revolutionary education leading up to October. On the other hand, it causes difficulty in constructive work after October.

The Russian worker—except the very top of the class—usually lacks the most elementary habits and motions of culture (in regard to tidiness, instruction, punctuality, etc.). The Western European worker possesses these habits. He has acquired them by a long and slow process, under the bourgeois regime. This explains why in Western Europe the working class—its superior elements, at any rate—is so strongly attached to the bourgeois regime with its democracy, freedom of the capitalist press, and all the other blessings. The belated bourgeois regime in Russia had no time to do any good to the working class, and the Russian proletariat broke from the bourgeoisie all the more easily, and overthrew the bourgeois regime without regret. But for the very same reason the Russian proletariat is only

just beginning to acquire and to accumulate the simplest habits of culture, doing it already in the conditions of the socialist workers' state.

History gives nothing free of cost. Having made a reduction on one point—in politics—it makes us pay the more on another—in culture. The more easily (comparatively, of course) did the Russian proletariat pass through the revolutionary crisis, the harder becomes now its socialist constructive work. But, on the other hand, the framework of our new social structure, marked by the four characteristics mentioned above, gives an objectively socialist content to all conscientious and rationally directed efforts in the domain of economics and culture. Under the bourgeois regime the worker, with no desire or intention on his part, was continually enriching the bourgeoisie, and did it all the more, the better his work was. In the Soviet state a conscientious and good worker, whether he cares to do it or not (in case he is not in the Party and keeps away from politics) achieves socialist results and increases the wealth of the working class. This is the doing of the October Revolution, and the NEP has not changed anything in this respect.

Workers who do not belong to the Party, who are deeply devoted to production, to the technical side of their work, are many in Russia, but they are not altogether "apolitical," not indifferent to politics. In all the grave and difficult moments of the revolution, they were with us. The overwhelming majority of them were not frightened by October, did not desert, were not traitors. During the Civil War many of them fought on the different fronts; others worked for the army, supplying the munitions. They may be described as "nonpolitical," but in the sense that in peacetime they care more for their professional work or their families than for politics. They all want to be good workers, to get more and more efficient each in his particular job, to rise to a higher position—partly for the benefit of their families, but also for the gratifications of their perfectly legitimate professional ambition. Implicitly, every one of them, as I said before, does socialist work without even being aware of it. But as the Communist Party, we want these workers consciously to connect their individual productive work with the problems of socialist construction as a whole. The interests of socialism will be better secured by such united activities, and the individual builders of socialism will get a higher moral satisfaction out of their work.

But how is this to be achieved? To approach this type of worker on purely political lines is very difficult. He has heard all the speeches that were spoken and does not care for more. He is not inclined to join the Party. His thoughts are centered on his work, and he is not particularly satisfied with the present conditions in the workshop, in the factory, in the trust. Such workers generally try to get at the bottom of things themselves, they are not communicative, and are just the class which produces self-taught inventors. They are not responsive to politics—at least not wholeheartedly—but they might and should be approached on matters concerning production and technique.

One of the members of the Moscow conference of mass propagandists, Comrade Kolzov, has pointed to the extreme shortage of manuals, handbooks, and guides published in Soviet Russia for the study of different trades and handicrafts. The old books of such a kind are mostly sold out, and besides, many of them are technically behind the time, whereas politically they are usually imbued with an exploiting capitalist spirit. New technical handbooks are very few and very difficult to get, having been published at random by different publishers or state departments without any general plan. From the technical point of view they are not always satisfactory; some of them are too abstract, too academic, and usually colorless politically, being, in fact, slightly disguised translations of foreign books. What we really want is a series of new handbooks—for the Soviet locksmith, the Soviet cabinetmaker, the Soviet electrician, etc. The handbooks must be adaptive to our up-to-date techniques and economics, must take into account our poverty, and on the other hand, our big possibilities; they must try to introduce new methods and new habits into our industrial life. They must—as far as possible anyhow—reveal socialist vistas corresponding

to the wants and interests of technical development (this includes problems of standardization, electrification and economic planning). Socialist principles and conclusions must not be more propaganda in such books. They must form an integral part of the practical teaching. Such books are very much needed, considering the shortage of qualified workers, the desire of the workers themselves to become more efficient, and considering also their interrupted industrial experience in conjunction with the long years of imperialist and civil war. We are faced here with an extremely gratifying and important task.

It is not an easy matter, of course, to create such a series of handbooks. Good practical workers do not write handbooks, and the theorists who do the writing usually have no experience of the practical side of work. Very few of them, moreover, have socialist views. The problem can be solved nevertheless—yet not by “simple,” i.e., routine methods, but by combined efforts. The joint work of, say, three authors is necessary to write, or at least to edit, a handbook. There should be a specialist with a thorough technical training, one who knows the conditions of our present production in the given trade or is able to get the necessary information; the other two should include a highly qualified worker of that particular trade, one who is interested in production, and if possible has some inventive aptitudes; and a professional writer, a Marxist, a politician with industrial and technical interests and knowledge. In this or some similar way, we must manage to create a model library of technical handbooks on industrial production. The books must, of course, be well printed, well stitched, to a handy size, and inexpensive. Such a library would be useful in two ways; it would raise the standard of work and contribute thereby to the success of socialist state construction, and on the other hand it would attach a very valuable group of industrial workers to Soviet economics as a whole, and consequently to the Communist Party.

To possess a series of handbooks is, of course, not all we want. I have dealt at some length with this particular question just to give an example of the new methods required by the new problems of the present day. There is much more to do in the interests of the “nonpolitical” industrial workers. Trade journals should be published, and technical societies ought to be started. A good half of our professional press should cater for the industrial worker of that “nonpolitical” but efficient type, if it wants to have readers outside the mere staff of the trade unions. The most telling political arguments, however, for the workers of that type are our practical achievements in industrial matters—every casual success in the management of our factories and workshops, every efficient effort of the Party in this direction.

The political views of the industrial worker, who matters most for us now, might be best illustrated by the following attempt to formulate approximately his rarely expressed thoughts.

“Well,” he would say, “all that business of the Revolution and the overthrowing of the bourgeoisie is right enough. Nothing to be said against it. It’s done once and forever. We have no use for the bourgeoisie. Nor do we need its Mensheviks or other helpmates. As to the ‘freedom of the press’—that does not matter. That is not the point either. But what about economics? You Communists have undertaken to manage it all. Your aims and plans are excellent—we know that. Don’t go on repeating what they are. We know all about it, we agree with you and are ready to back you—but how are you actually going to do things? Up till now—why not tell the truth?—you often did the wrong things. Well, yes. We know that it cannot all be done at once, that you have to learn the job, and mistakes and blunders can’t be avoided. That is all quite true. And since we have stood the crimes of the bourgeoisie, we must bear with the mistakes of the revolution. But there is a limit to everything. In our Communist ranks there are also all sorts of people just as among us poor sinners. Some do actually learn their jobs, are honestly intent on work, try to achieve practical results, but many more get off with idle talk. And they are doing much harm because with them business is simply slipping away through their fingers....”

That is how they reason, the workers of that type—clever, efficient locksmiths, or cabinetmakers, or founders, not excitable, rather of passive disposition in politics, but serious, critical, somewhat skeptical, yet always faithful to their class—proletarians of a high standard. In the present stage of our work the party must take this type of worker most specially into account. Our hold on them—in economics, production, technique—will be the most telling political sign of our success in the work for culture in the final sense of the word, in the sense in which it is used by Lenin.

Our special interest in the efficient worker is in no way opposed to the other most important problem of the party—the great interest in the younger generation of the proletariat. The younger generation grows up in the conditions of the given moment, grows sound and strong according to the way in which certain well-determined problems are solved. We want our younger generation, in the first place, to develop into good, highly qualified workers, devoted to their work. They must grow up with the firm conviction that their productive work is at the same time work for socialism. Interest in professional training, and desire for efficiency, will naturally give great authority in the eyes of our young proletarians to “the old men,” who are experts in their trade and who, as I said above, stand usually outside the party. We see, in consequence, that our interest in good, honest, and efficient workers serves the cause of a thorough education of the growing younger generation; without it there would be no onward march to socialism.

Trotsky, *Problems of Life*: 1-21.



## HABITS AND CUSTOM

11 July 1923

*This is the second in the series of articles referred to in the headnote to the previous document. In it Trotsky takes up the issue of changing the morals and daily behavior of people as one of the main objectives of the socialist revolution. This issue was repeatedly discussed throughout early Soviet history, either directly as here or as part of some larger topic. The moral transformation of man was seen by many as essential to the political and economic transformation into socialism.*

Leon Trotsky

### *Habit and Custom*

In the study of life it is peculiarly manifest to what an extent individual man is the product of environment rather than its creator. Daily life, i.e., conditions and customs, are, more than economics, “evolved behind men’s backs,” in the words of Marx. Conscious creativity in the domain of custom and habit occupies but a negligible place in the history of man. Custom is accumulated from the elemental experience of men; it is transformed in the same elemental way under the pressures of technical progress or the occasional stimulus of revolutionary struggle. But in the main, it reflects more of the past of human society than of its present.

Our proletariat is not old and has no ancestry. It had emerged in the last ten years partly from the petty townspeople and chiefly from the peasantry. The life of our proletariat clearly reflects its social origin. We have only to recall *The Morals of Rasteryaev Street*, by Gleb Uspensky. What are the main characteristics of the Rasteryaevs, i.e., the Tula

workers of the last quarter of the last century? They are all townsmen or peasants who, having lost all hope of becoming independent men, formed a combination of the uneducated petty bourgeoisie and the destitute. Since then the proletariat has made a big stride, but more in politics than in life and morals. Life is conservative. In its primitive aspect, of course, Rasteryaev Street no longer exists. The brutal treatment accorded to apprentices, the servility practiced before employers, the vicious drunkenness, and the street hooliganism have vanished. But in the relations of husband and wife, parents and children, in the domestic life of the family, fenced off from the whole world, Rasteryaevism is still firmly implanted. We need years and decades of economic growth and culture to banish Rasteryaevism from its last refuge—individual and family life—recreating it from top to bottom in the spirit of collectivism.

Problems of family life were the subject of a particularly heated discussion at a conference of the Moscow propagandists, which we have already mentioned. In regard to this everyone had some grievance. Impressions, observations, and questions, especially, were numerous; but there was no answer to them, for the very questions remain semi-articulate, never reaching the press or being aired at meetings. The life of the ordinary workers and the life of the Communists, and the line of contact between the two, provide such a big field for observation, deduction, and practical application!

Our literature does not help us in this respect. Art, by nature, is conservative; it is removed from life and is little able to catch events on the wing as they happen. *The Week*, by Libedinsky, excited a burst of enthusiasm among some of our comrades, an enthusiasm which appeared to me excessive, and dangerous for the young author. In regard to its form, *The Week*, notwithstanding its marks of talent, has the characteristics of the work of a schoolboy. It is only by much persistent, detailed work that Libedinsky can become an artist. I should like to think that he will do so. However, this is not the aspect which interests us at the moment. *The Week* gave the impression of being something new and significant not because of its artistic achievements but because of the "Communist" section of life with which it dealt. But in this respect especially, the matter of the book is not profound. The "gubkom" is presented to us with too much of the laboratory method; it has no deeper roots and is not organic. Hence, the whole of *The Week* becomes an episodic digression, a novel of revolutionary emigrants drawn from the life. It is, of course, interesting and instructive to depict the life of the "gubkom" but the difficulty and significance come when the life of Communist organization enters into the everyday life of the people. Here, a firm grip is required. The Communist Party at the present moment is the principal lever of every conscious forward movement. Hence, its unity with the masses of the people becomes the root of historic action, reaction, and resistance.

Communist theory is some dozen years in advance of our everyday Russian actuality—in some spheres perhaps even a century in advance. Were this not so, the Communist Party would be no great revolutionary power in history. Communist theory, by means of its realism and dialectical acuteness, finds the political methods for securing the influence of the party in any given situation. But the political idea is one thing, and the popular conception of morals is another. Politics change rapidly, but morals cling tenuously to the past.

This explains many of the conflicts among the working class, where fresh knowledge struggles against tradition. These conflicts are the more severe in that they do not find their expression in the publicity of social life. Literature and the press do not speak of them. The new literary tendencies, anxious to keep pace with the Revolution, do not concern themselves with the usages and customs based on the existing conception of morals, for they want to transform life, not describe it! But new morals cannot be produced out of nothing; they must be arrived at with the aid of elements already existing, but capable of development. It is therefore necessary to recognize what are these elements. This applies not only to the transformation of morals, but to every form of conscious human activity. It is therefore necessary first to know what already exists, and in what manner its change of form is proceeding, if we are to cooperate in the re-creation of morals.



We must first see what is really going on in the factory, among the workers, in the cooperative, the club, the school, the tavern, and the street. All this we have to understand; that is, we must recognize the remnants of the past and the seeds of the future. We must call upon our authors and journalists to work in this direction. They must describe life for us as it emerges from the tempest of revolution.

It is not hard to surmise, however, that appeals alone will not redirect the attentions of our writers. We need proper organization of this matter and proper leadership. The study and enlightenment of working class life must, in the first place, be made the foremost task of journalists—of those, at any rate, who possess eyes and ears. In an organized way we must put them on this work, instruct, correct, lead, and educate them thus to become revolutionary writers, who will write of everyday life. At the same time, we must broaden the angle of outlook of working class newspaper correspondents. Certainly almost any of them could produce more interesting and entertaining correspondence than we have nowadays. For this purpose, we must deliberately formulate questions, set proper tasks, stimulate discussion, and help to sustain it.

In order to reach a higher stage of culture, the working class—and above all its vanguard—must consciously study its life. To do this, it must know this life. Before the bourgeoisie came to power, it had fulfilled this task to a wide extent through its intellectuals. When the bourgeoisie was still an oppositional class, there were poets, painters, and writer already thinking about it.

In France, the eighteenth century, which has been named the century of enlightenment, was precisely the period in which the bourgeois philosophers were changing the conception of social and private morals, and were endeavoring to subordinate morals to the rule of reason. They occupied themselves with political questions, with the church, with the relations between man and woman, with education, etc. There is no doubt but that the mere fact of the discussion of these problems greatly contributed to the raising of the mental level of culture among the bourgeoisie. But all the efforts made by the eighteenth century philosophers towards subordinating social and private relations to the rule of reason were wrecked on one fact—the fact that the means of production were in private hands, and that this was the basis upon which society was to be built up according to the tenets of reason. For private property signifies free play to economic forces which are by no means controlled by reason. These economic conditions determine morals, and so long as the needs of the commodity market rule society, so long is it impossible to subordinate popular morals to reason. This explains the very slight practical results yielded by the ideas of the eighteenth century philosophers, despite the ingenuity and boldness of their conclusions.

In Germany, the period of enlightenment and criticism came about the middle of the last century. "Young Germany," under the leadership of Heine and Boerne, placed itself at the head of the movement. We here see the work of criticism accomplished by the left wing of the bourgeoisie, which declared war on the spirit of servility, on petty-bourgeois anti-enlightenment education, and on the prejudices of war, and which attempted to establish the rule of reason with even greater skepticism than its French predecessor. This movement amalgamated later with the petty-bourgeois revolution of 1848, which, far from transforming all human life, was not even capable of sweeping away the many little German dynasties.

In our backward Russia, the enlightenment and the criticism of the existing state of society did not reach any stage of importance until the second half of the nineteenth century. Chernyshevsky, Pisarev, and Dobrolyubov, educated in the Belinsky school, directed their criticism much more against the backwardness and reactionary Asiatic character of morals than against economic conditions. They opposed the new realistic human being to the traditional type of man, the new human being who is determined to live according to

reason, and who becomes a personality provided with the weapon of critical thought. This movement, connected with the so-called "popular" revolutionaries (Narodniks) had but slight cultural significance. For if the French thinkers of the eighteenth century were only able to gain a slight influence over morals—these being ruled by the economic conditions and not by philosophy—and if the immediate cultural influence of the German critics of society was even less, the direct influence exercised by this Russian movement on popular morals was quite insignificant. The historical role played by these Russian thinkers, including the Narodniks, consisted in preparing for the formation of the party of the revolutionary proletariat.

It is only the seizure of power by the working class which creates the premises for a complete transformation of morals. Morals cannot be rationalized—that is, made congruous with the demands of reason—unless production is rationalized at the same time, for the roots of morals lie in production. Socialism aims at subordinating all production to human reason. But even the most advanced bourgeois thinkers have confined themselves to the ideas of rationalizing technique on the one hand (by the application of natural science, technology, chemistry, invention, machines), and politics on the other (by parliamentarism); but they have not sought to rationalize economics, which has remained the prey of blind competition. Thus the morals of bourgeois society remain dependent on a blind and non-rational element. When the working class takes power, it sets itself the task of subordinating the economic principles of social conditions to a control and to a conscious order. By this means, and only by this means, is there a possibility of consciously transforming morals.

The successes that we gain in this direction are dependent on our success in the sphere of economics. But even in our present economic situation we could introduce much more criticism, initiative, and reason into our morals than we actually do. This is one of the tasks of our time. It is of course obvious that the complete change of morals—the emancipation of woman from household slavery, the social education of children, the emancipation of marriage from all economic compulsion, etc.—will only be able to follow on a long period of development, and will come about in proportion to the extent to which the economic forces of socialism win the upper hand over the forces of capitalism.

The critical transformation of morals is necessary so that the conservative traditional forms of life may not continue to exist in spite of the possibilities for progress which are already offered us today by our sources of economic aid, or will at least be offered tomorrow. On the other hand, even the slightest successes in the sphere of morals, by raising the cultural level of the working man and woman, enhance our capacity for rationalizing production, and promoting socialist accumulation. This again gives us the possibility of making fresh conquests in the sphere of morals. Thus a dialectical dependence exists between the two spheres. The economic conditions are the fundamental factor of history, but we, as a Communist Party and as a workers' state, can only influence economics with the aid of the working class, and to attain this we must work unceasingly to promote the technical and cultural capacity of the individual element of the working class. In the workers' state culture works for socialism and socialism again offers the possibility of creating a new culture for humanity, one which knows nothing of class difference.

Trotsky, *Problems of Life*; 22-33.



## "VODKA, THE CHURCH AND THE CINEMA"

12 July 1923

*The third in Trotsky's series on culture and daily life (see headnote for July 10). Trotsky proposed the cinema as an alternative to both drinking (vodka) and religion (the church) in the free time of the population. He accepted the human desire for amusement and argued that it can be fulfilled by the cinema, which at the same time could be a powerful weapon for political and cultural propaganda. Similarly it would more successfully combat religion than did direct anti-religious propaganda. In part Trotsky was reflecting the early Soviet enthusiasm for the propaganda and educational value of cinema, which Lenin reportedly had called the most important of the arts for the Bolsheviks (see Documents of Soviet History, II: 332).*

Leon Trotsky

*Vodka, the Church and the Cinema*

There are two big facts which have set a new stamp on working class life. The one is the advent of the eight-hour working day; the other, the prohibition of the sale of vodka. The liquidation of the vodka monopoly, for which the war was responsible, preceded the Revolution. The war demanded such enormous means that czarism was able to renounce the drink revenue as a negligible quantity, a billion rubles more or less making no very great difference. The Revolution inherited the liquidation of the vodka monopoly as a fact; it adopted the fact, but was actuated by considerations of principle. It was only with the conquest of power by the working class, which became the conscious creator of the new economic order, that the combating of alcoholism by the country, by education and prohibition, was able to receive its due historic significance. The circumstance that the "drunkards'" budget was abandoned during the imperialist war does not alter the fundamental fact that the abolition of the system by which the country encouraged people to drink is one of the iron assets of the Revolution.

As regards the eight-hour working day, that was a direct conquest of the Revolution. As a fact in itself, the eight-hour working day produced a radical change in the life of the worker, setting free two-thirds of the day from factory duties. This provides a foundation for a radical change of life for development and culture, social education, and so on, but a foundation only. The chief significance of the October Revolution consists in the fact that the economic betterment of every worker automatically raises the material well-being and culture of the working class as a whole.

"Eight hours work, eight hours sleep, eight hours play," says the old formula of the workers' movement. In our circumstances, it assumes a new meaning. The more profitably the eight hours work is utilized, the better, more cleanly, and more hygienically can the eight hours sleep be arranged for, and the fuller and more cultured can the eight hours of leisure become.

The question of amusements in this connection becomes of greatly enhanced importance in regard to culture and education. The character of a child is revealed and formed in its play. The character of an adult is clearly manifested in his play and amusements. But in forming the character of a whole class, when this class is young and moves ahead, like the proletariat, amusements and play ought to occupy a prominent position. The great French utopian reformer, Fourier, repudiating Christian asceticism and the suppression of the natural instincts, constructed his *phalansterie* (the communes of the future) on the correct and rational utilization and combination of human instincts and passions. The idea is a profound one. The working class state is neither a spiritual order nor a monastery. We take people as they have been made by nature, and as they have been in part educated and in part distorted by the old order. We seek a point of support in this vital human material for the application of our party and revolutionary state lever. The longing for amusement,

distraction, sight-seeing, and laughter is the most legitimate desire of human nature. We are able, and indeed obliged, to give the satisfaction of this desire a higher artistic quality, at the same time making amusement a weapon of collective education, freed from the guardianship of the pedagogue and the tiresome habit of moralizing.

The most important weapon in this respect, a weapon excelling any other, is at present the cinema. This amazing spectacular innovation has cut into human life with a successful rapidity never experienced in the past. In the daily life of capitalist towns, the cinema has become just such an integral part of life as the bath, the beer-hall, the church, and other indispensable institutions, commendable and otherwise. The passion for the cinema is rooted in the desire for distraction, the desire to see something new and improbable, to laugh and to cry, not at your own, but at other people's misfortunes. The cinema satisfies these demands in a very direct, visual, picturesque, and vital way, requiring nothing from the audience; it does not even require them to be literate. That is why the audience bears such a grateful love to the cinema, that inexhaustible fount of impressions and emotions. This provides a point, and not merely a point, but a huge square, for the application of our socialist educational energies.

The fact that we have so far, i.e., in nearly six years, not taken possession of the cinema shows how slow and uneducated we are, not to say, frankly, stupid. This weapon, which cries out to be used, is the best instrument for propaganda, technical, educational, and industrial propaganda, propaganda against alcohol, propaganda for sanitation, political propaganda, any kind of propaganda you please, a propaganda which is accessible to everyone, which is attractive, which cuts into the memory and may be made a possible source of revenue.

In attracting and amusing, the cinema already rivals the beer-hall and the tavern. I do not know whether New York or Paris possesses at the present time more cinemas or taverns, or which of these enterprises yields more revenue. But it is manifest that, above everything, the cinema competes with the tavern in the matter of how the eight leisure hours are to be filled. Can we secure this incomparable weapon? Why not? The government of the czar, in a few years, established an intricate set of state barrooms. The business yielded a yearly revenue of almost a billion gold rubles. Why should not the government of the workers establish a net of state cinemas? This apparatus of amusement and education could more and more be made to become an integral part of national life. Used to combat alcoholism, it could at the same time be made into a revenue-yielding concern. Is it practicable? Why not? It is, of course, not easy. It would be, at any rate, more natural and more in keeping with the organizing energies and abilities of a workers' state than, let us say, the attempt to restore the vodka monopoly.

The cinema competes not only with the tavern but also with the church. And this rivalry may become fatal for the church if we make up for the separation of the church from the socialist state by the fusion of the socialist state and the cinema.

Religiousness among the Russian working classes practically does not exist. It actually never existed. The Orthodox Church was a daily custom and a government institution. It never was successful in penetrating deeply into the consciousness of the masses, nor in blending its dogmas and canons with the inner emotions of the people. The reason for this is the same—the uncultured condition of old Russia, including her church. Hence, when awakened for culture, the Russian worker easily throws off his purely external relation to the church, a relation which grew on him by habit. For the peasant, certainly, this becomes harder, not because the peasant has more profoundly and intimately entered into the church teaching—this has, of course, never been the case—but because the inertia and monotony of his life are closely bound up with the inertia and monotony of church practices.

The workers' relation to the church (I am speaking of the nonparty mass worker) holds mostly by the thread of habit, the habit of women in particular. Icons still hang in the home because they are there. Icons decorate the walls; it would be bare without them; people

would not be used to it. A worker will not trouble to buy new icons, but has not sufficient will to discard the old ones. In what way can the spring festival be celebrated if not by Easter cake? And Easter cake must be blessed by the priest, otherwise it will be so meaningless. As for church-going, the people do not go because they are religious; the church is brilliantly lighted, crowded with men and women in their best clothes, the singing is good—a range of social-aesthetic attractions not provided by the factory, the family, or the workaday street. There is no faith or practically none. At any rate, there is no respect for the clergy or belief in the magic force of ritual. But here is no active will to break it all. The elements of distraction, pleasure, and amusement play a large part in church rites. By theatrical methods the church works on the sight, the sense of smell (through incense), and through them on the imagination. Man's desire for the theatrical, a desire to see and hear the unusual, the striking, a desire for a break in the ordinary monotony of life, is great and ineradicable; it persists from early childhood to advanced old age. In order to liberate the common masses from ritual and the ecclesiasticism acquired by habit, anti-religious propaganda alone is not enough. Of course, it is necessary; but its direct practical influence is limited to a small minority of the more courageous in spirit. The bulk of the people are not affected by anti-religious propaganda; but that is not because their spiritual relation to religion is so profound. On the contrary, there is no spiritual relation at all; there is only a formless, inert, mechanical relation, which has not passed through the consciousness; a relation like that of the street sight-seer, who on occasion does not object to joining in a procession or a pompous ceremony, or listening to singing, or waving his arms.

Meaningless ritual, which lies on the consciousness like an inert burden, cannot be destroyed by criticism alone; it can be supplanted by new forms of life, new amusements, new and more cultured theaters. Here again, thoughts go naturally to the most powerful—because it is the most democratic—instrument of the theater: the cinema. Having no need of a clergy in brocade, etc., the cinema unfolds on the white screen spectacular images of greater grip than are provided by the richest church, grown wise in the experience of a thousand years, or by mosque or synagogue. In church only one drama is performed, and always one and the same, year in, year out; while in the cinema next door you will be shown the Easters of heathen, Jew, and Christian, in their historic sequence, with their similarity of ritual. The cinema amuses, educates, strikes the imagination by images, and liberates you from the need of crossing the church door. The cinema is a great competitor not only of the tavern but also of the church. Here is an instrument which we must secure at all costs!

Trotsky, *Problems of Life*: 34-43.



#### THE PARTY LEADERSHIP DENOUNCES TROTSKY AND THE FORTY-SIX FOR FACTIONALISM

27 October 1923

*By the summer of 1923 Soviet Russia was in the grip of a multi-faceted political and economic crisis. This sparked the beginning of an intertwined political and economic controversy which lasted the rest of the 1920s. Both industrial growth and grain deliveries to the cities were falling. Strikes and economic unrest among workers grew. The first signs of the power struggle after Lenin were appearing. Various other issues were causing discontent among various Party leaders as well as the populace. Criticism of the Party leadership reemerged,*

*focused on economic issues, on party organizational problems and growing bureaucratization, and complaints of the stifling of democracy within the Party. On 8 October 1923 Trotsky launched a stinging attack on the Party leadership's handling of political and economic issues in a letter to the Central Committee. The letter was never made public, but was quoted extensively in an article in Sotsialisticheskii vestnik, an emigre Menshevik newspaper. A week after Trotsky's letter a group of Party figures sent a secret memorandum to the Politburo criticizing the economic and political policies of the leadership. This became known as the "Declaration of the Forty-Six." This marked the beginning of a fierce party conflict which consumed the rest of 1923 and much of 1924, and also marked the emergence of a new "Left Opposition" which, in various permutations, persisted through the middle 1920s. The Party leadership, the so-called "troika" or "triumvirate" of Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin, responded to the criticisms by convening a special joint session of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, from 25-27 October. Its resolution, not surprisingly, condemned both Trotsky and the Forty-six for "factionalism" and for threatening the unity of the Party at a critical time.*

#### ON THE INTRA-PARTY SITUATION

The plenums entirely support the movement toward intra-party democracy undertaken in timely fashion by the Politburo, and also the intensified struggle, proposed by the Politburo, against excesses and against the demoralizing influence of the NEP on certain elements of the party.

The plenums instruct the Politburo to do all that is necessary to accelerate the work of the commissions appointed by the Politburo and the September plenum: 1) the commission on the 'scissors' [rise in prices of manufactured goods; fall in agricultural prices], 2) on wages, and 3) on the situation within the party.

After elaborating the necessary measures on these issues the Politburo must immediately start to implement them, reporting on this to the next Central Committee plenum.

The Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, meeting jointly with the representatives of ten party organizations, consider Comrade Trotsky's speech, at this crucial moment for the international revolution and the party, to be a serious political error, especially because Comrade Trotsky's attack on the Politburo took on the objective character of a factional speech threatening to strike a blow at the party's unity and to create a crisis within the party. The plenums note with regret that in raising these issues Comrade Trotsky followed the course of appealing to individual party members instead of the only permitted course—of first submitting these questions for discussion by the boards of which Comrade Trotsky is himself a member.

The course selected by Comrade Trotsky was a signal to a factional grouping (the Declaration of the 46).

The Central Committee and Central Control Commission plenums, together with the representatives of the ten party organizations, resolutely condemn the Declaration of the 46 as a step in the direction of a factional-splitting policy, taking this form perhaps against the will of those signing the declaration. This declaration could place the whole life of the party in the months to come under the threat of an intra-party struggle, thus weakening the party at the most crucial time for the fate of the international revolution.

McNeal/Gregor, I: 207-8.



## PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT OF WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' INSPECTORATE

12 November 1923

*The Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate (RKI, Rabkrin) had been created in 1920 to "fight bureaucratism and corruption in Soviet institutions," with Stalin at its head. It had a difficult early career and nearly everyone was unhappy with its performance. Reorganized and strengthened by this new restructuring, and working closely with the Party's Central Control Commission (C.C.C.), it became an important Soviet control institution and one of the major power bases for Stalin in his rise to dominance.*

STATUTE OF THE PEOPLES' COMMISSARIAT FOR WORKERS' AND  
PEASANTS' INSPECTION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

## Chapter I.—General Provisions

In conformity with Chapter VIII of the fundamental law (Constitution) of the USSR, there shall be established the RKI of the USSR.

The RKI is the main organ of Soviet authority concerned with carrying out all measures taken to improve the state apparatus, to manage it properly, and to adjust it to the final ends of socialist construction.

In conformity with this, the RKI is entrusted with the following:

## Chapter II.—Duties of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate

1. The practical and theoretical study of the administration; criticism of the defects and emphasis on the positive side of the working of the existing administrative organs; removal of the former and furthering the latter; carrying out experimental tests and taking practical measures to systematize the techniques of administration, office routine, and records; working out of the most effective methods of accounting, bookkeeping, and balances; drafting new plans of desirable changes in the structure of state organs in order to improve their work, as well as to create simultaneously such normal working conditions as will facilitate supervision by the state.

2. Directing the state, administrative, and economic organs toward the improvement of their organization; lending them all possible assistance in this respect, recording their experiments, and coordinating and unifying all measures taken by them.

3. General supervision and unification of activity of all institutions engaged in the scientific organization of labor, production, and techniques of administration through representation in the RKI, based on a special act; the organization, in certain cases, of experimental centers which may be of state importance, as well as the organization of institutions and cells which would help improve the state apparatus.

Note: The cells promoting the improvement of the governmental apparatus shall be established on the basis of a statute provided for and worked out by the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR, subject to approval by the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR.

4. Detailed examination and analysis of the quarterly and yearly budgets of the USSR, of the union and local republics in terms of their financial reality and economic rationality; giving opinions on state appropriations made by the People's Commissariats for Finance of the USSR and of the union republics; examination and analysis of the plans of production and of their execution by the economic organs, as well as implementing plans of administrative and cultural-educational organs; revision of the activity of all state and other organs enumerated in Article 12 of this act from the vantage point of results attained, as well as systematic inspection thereof on the basis of collected materials and scientific data.

5. Appraisal and examination of the work of the heads and assistants of the administrative and economic organs of the USSR; rendering them assistance in selecting the necessary personnel; taking necessary measures for the practical training of workers and peasants for holding responsible offices, as well as helping the party workers most devoted to the cause.

6. Examination and study of the causes of offenses and negligence by superior officials and agents of the state organs; fight against bribery by issuing appropriate directions which shall conform with legal and administrative directives.

7. Give special and careful attention to improving the governmental apparatus and economic organs where they come into immediate contact with the population; systematic and planned utilization of the soviet, party, and trade press, for the purpose of implementing a merciless struggle against all officials in the state organs who neglect the interest and needs of workers and peasants, especially illiterate ones, as well as the workers of the nationalities; struggle against all kinds of offenses, economic as well as those connected with official duty, neglect, bureaucracy, etc.

8. Studying the methods of accounting and procedure in the state and communal organs of the USSR, as well as control and supervision over workers in this field. Establishment of proper methods of bookkeeping, of drawing up balance ledgers and the enforcement of uniform units of measure. Establishment in the RKI of a body of expert state accountants.

9. Implementing special orders and directions of the supreme organs of the USSR, as well as control and supervision over the gradual execution of decrees and decisions of these organs, primarily those aiming to improve the state apparatus.

10. Large-scale publication of information concerning questions about the scientific organization of labor, production, and administration, as well as audit and inspection achievements.

11. Supervising the work of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection in the union republics in matters concerning the completion of tasks assigned to them.

### Chapter III.—The Prerogatives of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate

In order to carry out its duties, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate shall enjoy the following prerogatives:

12. Complete or partial revisional-inspectional investigations of all central, regional, local, state and communal organs and establishments, as well as of unions thereof, including cooperative and trade organs of the USSR, stock and miscellaneous companies, concessional enterprises, and all types of communal organizations which receive a subsidy from the state or which operate with the assistance of state capital, communal taxes, or other revenues.

Note: State enterprises leased to private individuals or organizations, as well as privately owned or concessional enterprises, are examined by the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate only within the limits provided for in the agreements between the state and the owners of such enterprises.

13. The right to request from all state and communal organizations of the USSR all kinds of information, materials, documents, acts, memoranda, reports, and other data illustrating the condition and activity of the institutions, enterprises, and organizations; the right to request the appearance of the persons in charge, as well as of officials of the investigated organs, to give personal testimony or for participation in joint meetings, sessions, or sub-commissions, in order to discuss questions which may arise in the course of such investigation.



14. The right to suggest to all state organs, enterprises, or organizations under investigation that they: (a) remove all defects observed, (b) take necessary steps to systematize the whole apparatus, (c) discharge and recall officials for serious offenses and neglect, (d) fix disciplinary punishment within the limits determined by law.

Note: In case of disagreement with the suggestions of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate, the heads of organs and enterprises enumerated in Article 12 must immediately submit their objections to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate.

15. To submit to the central and local organs of the USSR and to the central organs of the union republics all concrete proposals worked out on the basis of inspections concerning the simplification of the administrative apparatus and the removal of overlapping and inefficiency; to submit concrete proposals concerning coordinating the activity of individual commissariats or their local organs, as well as the reorganization of the whole system of routine procedure in the institutions or individual departments.

16. The organization and ratification, either directly or through the People's Commissariats of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate of each union republic, of acts about organs for the systematizing of the departmental apparatus (bureaus of planning and organization experimental centers and cells, promoting the improvement of the state apparatus); approval of forms for permanent official reports of those organs on the work and condition of the institution, as well as the discharge of the personnel of these organs.

17. The closing and complete liquidation of departmental organs for the systematizing of the state apparatus of the USSR, of individual scientific research, labor and administrative institutions, and of oversight and inspection organizations and groups in the event their work or their personnel are inadequate.

18. The convocation of meetings, conferences, and congresses for the discussion of problems of the scientific organization of labor, production, and the technique of administration; for establishing efficient methods of economics and administration, accounting, annual reports, etc.; for drafting plans and programs of education, together with education organs and trade unions, and training of various qualified workers in the scientific organization of labor, production, and administrative techniques.

19. Participation, with the right of advisory vote, in all commissions and meetings organized by the supreme organs in the center or in the localities; in meetings of the collegia of People's Commissariats, executive committees and their presidia, as well as in all congresses, conferences, meetings and administrative sessions of the state organs, enterprises, or their unions, or of communal and cooperative organizations, etc.

20. The suspension of illegal orders and activities of the inspected organs or their officials.

Note 1: The right of suspension of the orders and activities belongs to the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR and of the union republics and to the heads of the regional and provincial organs of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate respectively.

Note 2: The suspension of activities and orders of institutions by agencies of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate may be declared void only by higher level organs of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate. The suspension of activities and orders of institutions, approved by the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR, may be declared void only by the Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars or by the Council of Labor and Defense of the USSR.

Note 3: This right of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies of the USSR does not extend to the decisions and orders of the Central Executive Committees and Sovnarkoms of the union republics, to the People's Commissariats of the USSR or of the union republics, save to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate of each union republic and to local executive committees or their presidia, as well as to the decisions and

sentences of the judicial organs or orders of inquiry and procurature within the limits of their competence.

21. The initiation of administrative and judicial prosecution of officials accused of committing offenses disclosed in the course of the work of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate, with subsequent orders to the judicial authorities and procurature to proceed with further investigation of the case.

22. Orders (direct or through the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate of each union republic) to the institutions and enterprises concerning claims for compensation for losses suffered by the state, as well as independent submission of these claims.

23. Publication in the press by the People's Commissariat or by the collegium of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR of the list of officials accused of offenses while in office, incompetence and neglect of the interests of the working masses, but only in cases where these offenses are not contested by the heads of the departments and institutions.

Chapter IV.—The Structure of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR.

24. The People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR is composed of:

- A. The People's Commissar and collegium;
- B. Four central departments;
  - (a) operative division,
  - (b) division for the improvement of the state apparatus,
  - (c) division for accounting and bookkeeping,
  - (d) general division;
- C. Three independent departments:
  - (a) division of information and press,
  - (b) judicial division,
  - (c) central bureau of claims and applications.

25. The central departments are composed of the following inspections, sections, and divisions:

- A. The operative division consists of nine inspections:
  - (a) industry,
  - (b) trade,
  - (c) agriculture,
  - (d) finance,
  - (e) transport and communications,
  - (f) army and marine,
  - (g) administration
  - (h) culture-education,
  - (i) labor, health, and social welfare.
- B. The division of the improvement of the state apparatus consists of two sections:
  - (a) labor and production,
  - (b) administrative technique.
- C. The division of accounting and bookkeeping consists of two sections:
  - (a) bookkeeping,
  - (b) accounting.
- D. The general division consists of three sub-divisions:
  - (a) general offices and secretariat,
  - (b) organization and instruction,
  - (c) economic and financial.

Chapter V.—Competence of the Central Organs of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR.

26. The operative division of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate is charged with the supervision over all inspectional-audit work of the inspectorates included in its composition. The central inspectorates carry out their work according to the functional division, the main object being the activity of corresponding People's Commissariats. The exact division of competence of separate central inspectorates shall be determined by the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR.

27. The division for the improvement of the state apparatus is charged with:

In the section of labor and production: (a) developing rational methods of work processes, (b) solving the problems of systematization of techniques of production, standardization, and increase of the productivity of labor; (e) the establishment of norms of production and protection of labor.

In the section of administrative technique: (a) developing rational methods of operating the administrative apparatus of the state, economic, and communal institutions and establishments; (b) determining the structure of the state apparatus, personnel, office routine, etc., and developing rational methods of administration.

28. The division of accounting and bookkeeping is charged with determining and developing the best methods of accounting, bookkeeping, balance, etc., in the soviet institutions.

29. The general administrative office is charged with:

In the division of general administration and secretariat: (a) the correspondence of the collegium of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR; (b) the preparation of materials on matters to be submitted by the People's Commissariat to the supreme legislative bodies; (c) the implementation of special orders and duties (not provided for in this act); (d) correspondence, general registration, dispatch, and supervision of the general archives and library of the People's Commissariat.

In the division of organization and instruction: (a) supervising the execution of all orders and instructions by all organs of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate; summarizing and preparing material on questions concerning the structure, forms, and work methods of all organs of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate; (b) drafting of general reports and statistical data on the institutions of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate; (c) determining the staff list and supervising the personnel of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR.

In the division of economics and finances: (a) drafting the budgets and financing the central and local institutions of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR; (b) control over the proper distribution of funds and material; (c) economic and technical assistance to the central organs of the People's Commissariat.

30. The division of information and press is charged with publishing and distributing periodicals, pamphlets, as well as all kind of printed matter, books, magazines, etc., and informing the press of the activity of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate of the USSR.

31. The judicial division is charged with: (a) studying the reasons, based on the material of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, as well as of the organs of inquiry and judicial procedure, for the increase of state, economic, and official offenses, and developing measures to prevent further increase; (b) the delivery of judicial opinions on various questions and also initiating the prosecution in an administrative-judicial order, through the collegium of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR, of all offenses disclosed in the course of the work of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate.

32. The bureau of claims and applications is charged with: (a) the receipt of applications and claims which indicate the imperfection of the state apparatus, or negligence by

officials of the needs of the working masses, or bureaucratic idleness, etc.; (b) inquiry into these questions, and rendering a decision according to a special act of the central bureau of claims and local organs and subject to ratification by the Central Executive Committee and Council of People's Commissars of the USSR.

Chapter VI.—Of the People's Commissariats of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the Union Republics and of the local organs of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR

33. The regulations of the People's Commissariats and local organs of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorates of the union republics are established in conformity with the present act, and are then, upon approval by the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR, submitted for ratification to the Central Executive Committees and Councils of People's Commissars of the union republics.

34. The local organs of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR are: (a) the office of the plenipotentiary of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR; (b) inspections of the USSR: army and marine, transport and communications, which work on the basis of special orders issued by the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the USSR.

Batsell: 611-18; with extensive modification based on the published decree.



#### FORMATION OF THE OGPU—THE UNIFIED STATE POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION

15 November 1923

*The formation of the USSR required the reorganization of the secret police. It was not merely a retitling, however, for the new OGPU was attached directly to the Council of People's Commissars rather than reporting to the Commissariat of Justice, a significant upgrading of its status. At first it tended to continue to concern itself with the same categories of activity as the GPU (see volume two of Documents of Soviet History), but later expanded dramatically during Stalin's industrialization and collectivization drive. It remained the main political police agency until 1934, when a new reorganization led to its functions being taken over by the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD).*

#### DECREE

of the Central Executive Committee Organizing the Unified State Political Administration [OGPU] of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and on the Organs Thereof

1. In conformity with Article 61 of the Constitution of the USSR, and in order to consolidate the revolutionary efforts of the republics in their struggle against the political and economic counter-revolution, espionage, and banditry, the OGPU shall be created in the Sovnarkom of the USSR.

2. The president of the OGPU and his deputy are appointed by the presidium of the TsIK of the USSR. The president and his deputy are members of the Sovnarkom of the USSR with the right of advisory vote.

3. To the president of the OGPU of the USSR is attached a collegium, the members of which are appointed with the consent of the Sovnarkom of the USSR and have all rights of the members of the collegia of People's Commissariats of the USSR.

4. Within the jurisdiction of the OGPU fall: (a) Direction of the activity of all state political administrations of the union republics and special departments of the military circuits subordinate thereto, as well as of the activity of all organs of transportation of the state political administrations on the rail and water ways throughout the corresponding union republics.

(b) Immediate direction of and supervision over the special departments of the frontiers and armies.

(c) Organization of the protection of the boundaries of the USSR.

(d) Immediate operative work on an all-Union scale.

5. The OGPU and its local organs have the rights of active units of the Red Army in all matters relating to the use of rail, water and air ways, as well as of the state means of communication (telephone, mail, telegraph, etc.); and in matters relating to the equipping of these special departments, frontier branches, and of the personnel of the OGPU with supplies and clothing.

6. The agents of the OGPU and of the local organs thereof in their rights and duties, as well as in all other aspects, have a status similar to those in active military service.

7. The OGPU has its own separate budget, approved by the Sovnarkom and included in the budget of the USSR. In the budget of the OGPU are included likewise the budgets of special branches thereof engaged on the fronts and in the armies, as well as the budgets of the state political administrations of the union republics, including also the budgets of all special branches in the military circuits and of the organs of transportation subordinate thereto.

8. At the immediate disposal of the OGPU are special military units whose number shall be determined by the STO [Soviet of Labor and Defense]; they are subordinate in all respects to the president of the OGPU or his deputy.

9. The OGPU directs the activity of the local organs of the state political administrations through its plenipotentiaries accredited to the Sovnarkom of the union republics and acting in conformity with special statutes ratified in a legislative manner.

10. The OGPU, state political administrations of the union republics, special units, the frontier organs, as well as all organs of transportation act in conformity with the decision of VTsIK, dated February 6, 1922, October 16, 1922, and March 22, 1922, as well as of the central executive committees of the union republics, and in conformity with the decision of the presidium of the TsIK of the USSR on November 2, 1923.

11. The OGPU has its representative in the Supreme Court of the USSR, subject to the consent of the presidium of the TsIK of the USSR as provided for in Article 45 of the Constitution of the USSR.

12. Supervision over the legality of the actions of the OGPU of the USSR lie within the jurisdiction of the prosecutor of the Supreme Court of the USSR in an order and within the limits as determined in the statute on the Supreme Court of the USSR ratified at the third session of the TsIK of the USSR, and in special decisions of the presidium of the TsIK of the USSR.

Batsell: 609-610.



## ZINOVIEV ON THE PARTY AND WORKERS' DEMOCRACY

1 December 1923

*Zinoviev quickly emerged in 1923 as the nominal leader of the troika of Kamenev, Stalin and himself, and therefore of the Party. He was perhaps the best known among the troika members,*

*nationally and internationally. He was a member of the Politburo, Secretary of the powerful and prestigious Petrograd party organization, Chairman of the Communist International, a long time associate of Lenin and an accomplished polemicist. He played a vigorous role in party debates with Trotsky and other controversies of the 1920s. In this essay he discusses many of the issues of the 1923 debates from the perspective of the party leadership. His justification for limiting party democracy is especially worth noting. Zinoviev had a well-deserved reputation for verbosity and for long-winded speeches; this one has been abridged.*

G. V. Zinoviev

Speech delivered at the Fourteenth Petrograd Provincial Party Conference

Comrades! At the present time the Central Committee of the Party is engaged with the discussion of those same questions which are now being dealt with publicly. The Central Committee has formed a comprehensive commission, participated in by some members of the Political Bureau, for dealing with this question. This commission will begin work within the next few days, and we are firmly convinced that within the next few days the Central Committee will lay before the whole Party a definite and unanimously accepted resolution containing propositions towards the solution of the whole of the burning questions which have been recently debated in the press.

Perhaps, comrades, I really acted somewhat wrongly in giving the title of: "New tasks of our Party" to the article which I wrote as subject for discussion. A number of opponents have pointed out that these are merely old questions which have never been answered, and that the title of my article does not therefore quite correspond to its contents. To be perfectly accurate, I should have indicated that I was writing on the topical tasks now set before our Party—whether they be old or new tasks will be seen later.

At the present juncture, however, we are faced with a number of problems requiring solution, authoritative solution, on the part of the Party.

For two years the Party has been working under the conditions induced by the NEP. At the Twelfth Party Congress I emphasized the fact that we must make a distinction between two things. In the first place the New Economic Policy is a historically necessary and very earnest chapter in the history of our struggle for the world revolution. But when we speak of the NEP we have often in mind the capitalist commercial view of it, the speculative moment. I believe, comrades, that we must not forget this difference for a moment.

To what degree has this NEP influenced our Party? Are those adversaries right who croaked their prophesies that the NEP was bound to transform our Party into a petty bourgeois party? Is it true that the fundamental nucleus of our party organism has degenerated? Is it true that we have ceased to be the party of the world revolution, and have become transformed into a party of democratic petty bourgeoisie?

It seems to me, comrades, that the best answer to these questions is as follows: The German revolution is developing, but the period of its development is proving longer than the estimate made by us, in the month of October, on the basis of our information. The German revolution is postponed for some months, but the fact that our Party took action, and the manner of this action is and remains, in view of the impending events, a point of the utmost importance.

The Party, from the top to the bottom, down to the last man, reacted upon the impending events in Germany just as the revolutionary Party of the proletariat should react, and not as would have been expected of a NEP party....

### Our Weak Points

This does not by any means signify that we possess no weaknesses whatever within the Party. We have many weak points. In connection with the NEP, we can observe, in my opinion, two departures from the correct line, two false views of the nature of the Party itself.

On the one hand, those comrades who are up to their eyes in administrative economic work look upon the Party as an institution provided for the purpose of aiding the successful execution of administrative or economic work. The others go to the opposite extreme and look upon the Party as a sort of free debating society, a kind of "Parliament of opinions."

Neither extreme is right. We must reject both, and must look upon our Party, as it is right for Bolsheviks to do, as a political organism, connected with the masses by thousands of threads, and setting itself the gigantic task of leading the whole state.

What is the present qualitative standard of our Party? We have statistical data up till 1 September 1923. Speaking generally, our statistics are somewhat lame in this direction. As you know, the latest statistics were compiled with special care and accuracy, with the aid of the Central Committee. I believe that they correspond very fairly with the truth.

The figures are somewhat surprising. We had all assumed that we have about half a million, or even 600,000 party members. It appears, however, that up to 1 September we had in the whole federation only 351,000 Communists (including the Communists in the Red Army), and 92,000 candidates for party membership. To this the Komsomol must further be added. I am however dealing with the numbers of the Party in the strict sense of the word.

We have 54,000 party members actually working in the shops and factories (not including candidates); this is but few.

It goes without saying that it is a perfectly unavoidable circumstance that we have been obliged to absorb the best and most mature Communist forces for the purpose of state leadership, and have taken these from the workshops and factories. We could not have otherwise formed the Red Army, or the economic, administrative, and Soviet organs. It is perfectly comprehensible that the Party governing the state has to concentrate a considerable portion of its numbers in the state institutions. Despite this it appears to me, comrades, that if we adopt a correct attitude we have well-founded prospects of increasing the number of our members in the shops and factories; in my opinion this is one of our most important tasks.

Another question is that of the intensification of party work, of the intensification of the inner party democracy. Those comrades who point out that this question was raised at the Tenth Party Congress, and that the resolutions passed by the Tenth congress have not been fully carried out, in some cases not carried out at all, are perfectly right.

We put this question in the year 1921, and passed a fairly good resolution on the question of inner Party democracy. The reasons why this resolution has not been carried out are substantially objective in nature.

Let us cast our memory back to that time. What were the working people of Petrograd interested in at that time? The situation was extraordinarily difficult. The workers were chiefly and above all interested in their morsel of bread. You will doubtless be able to recollect the atmosphere obtaining at that time in a number of other proletarian centers.

When passing over to the NEP, we formulated our fresh tasks at the same time. But at that time we could not perform them, for the working class was divided and de-classed, and the subject which occupied every worker all and every day, and which hung like a leaden weight about his neck, was the question of the potato ration. We are now putting the question under much more favorable circumstances. The fundamental difference in conditions lies in the fact that the de-classing process in the working class has ceased.

The proletariat, which melted, split, and became de-classed during the first years of the Revolution, is now beginning to gather together again into a compact mass. This is the cardinal circumstance changing the situation.

The same workers who have been pulling in different directions all these years, are now coming into our works and factories, and bringing with them the political experience garnered and increased during these years. They have shared with us the first successes won

on the economic field. These successes, comrades, are still very small—we need not deceive ourselves—but they are dear to us for the very reason that they are the “very first” ones.

The feeling that we have gained our first economic successes is seizing the broad masses of the conscientious nonpartisan workers. A wholesome atmosphere of production is to be felt, which was not the case before, but which was necessary if all our talk on the development of the Party was not based upon sand. Bad or good—wages have been raised, the productivity of work has increased, and discipline in production has improved.

I stated that the failure to put the resolutions of 1921 into actual practice had been mainly caused by objective obstacles. But there were subjective reasons too, dependent on us and our organization. These subjective reasons are to be classified in two groups: one of these is the mechanical nature of our organization. It was very difficult for us to get underway, to run on new lines from War Communism to the new epoch. The other group of causes is explained by our inadequate cultural level—this is one of the fundamental causes confronting us at every step of the way. There exists a certain minimum of political schooling, of political learning capacity, of political and general culture, without which many of the best resolutions are condemned to hang fire.

### **Bolshevism and the Workers' Democracy**

I have already stated, at the functionaries' meeting, that Bolshevism has not always held its present attitude on the question of the workers' democracy. There was a time when Bolshevism, in view of the objective conditions obtaining in our country, expressed itself in opposition to a broad degree of adherence to the principle of election within the Party. There was such a period up to the Revolution of 1905.

It was in a great measure along these lines that our split with the Mensheviks ran. The Mensheviks followed the demagogic line of “democracy” and “election” even under circumstances rendering adherence to these principles impossible....

During that period, when Czarist absolutism still existed, we were unable to hold to the principle of election.

We were obliged to have a strictly conspiratorial and centralized party organization, as comrade Lenin demonstrated. He stated that adherence to the principle of election would only have been to the advantage of the police. Those revolutionary workers who are capable of taking leading party positions will be appointed by us, and will be appointed without any fuss. But to preach consistent democracy within the Party under an absolutist regime, at a moment when we require the concentration of conspiracy and centralism, would signify that we succumb to demagogy and place the Revolution in danger.

It was no easy task to defend this official standpoint of Bolshevism. The Mensheviks earned cheap laurels, just as any “democrat” can earn them now, by singing the praises of democracy, without any regard for the situation as a whole.

In January 1905, Bolshevism declared that a broad adherence to the principle of election within the Party was impossible. But if the principle of election is not possible, where is democracy? Thus a broad democracy was equally impossible for the Party. For us the highest law is the furtherance of the Revolution, but we do not follow the letter, the dogma. The furtherance of the Revolution demands that our organization is strictly conspiratorial and concentrated. When the situation changes, then we shall raise the question of the workers' democracy within the Party.

And in actual fact, after Czarism was overthrown we raised for the first time the question of inner party democracy, in another form.

The whole of the periods between 1905-1907 were a variegated intermingling of the legal with the illegal, and thus also a combination of the beginning of inner party democracy and the relentless inner party centralization and conspiracy, in accordance with the exigencies of the changing situation.



The years of counter-revolution began. The Party was plunged into illegality. The legal element diminished until the year 1911, when the "Zvezda" and later on the "Pravda" appeared. The element of legality vanished almost completely, and the elements of conspiracy and centralization took the upper hand. During the period 1908-1912 we lived in complete illegality. Nothing was heard of inner party democracy. The leaders of the Party were appointed from above. Two to three comrades were chosen, and had the right of cooption.

Then came the war. The party organizations dwindled away; a part was driven into illegality, and the conspiratorial element increased.

It need not be said that after the fall of Czarism, in the year 1917, we began to rebuild the Party. But then the Civil War began, and this meant that every muscle had to be strained to its utmost tension, and it meant that the principle of democracy had to be confined to certain limits.

### **The Defects of Our Organization**

Have we had, or have we still, faulty sides to our organization? Undoubtedly we have! Far too large a number of circulars are issued, and these substitute for living energy. Even in such a splendid and universally beloved organization as Komsomol. Almost all the organizers of the collectives are appointed from above, by the province leaders. We know such provinces. We have followed the rule of appointing the organizers for the collectives. But now this rule can and must be altered. We must give the nuclei the opportunity of even falling into error of now and again electing an organizer who may prove useless for his position, and may have to be replaced by another. It goes without saying that where a nucleus is unsound, it must be cured.

In our Petrograd organization there is also room for improvement. We have 30,000 new metal workers in Petrograd. Has this fact been sufficiently apparent in the party organization? No! But this great event—30,000 new metal workers, among whom there is a considerable base of the old "hereditary" proletariat—should be noticeable in our organization. There should be a supply of fresh blood. But this is not the case. It is imperative that this be changed.

### **The Limitations of the Workers' Democracy**

Reference must be made to those limitations which we have consciously placed upon the workers' democracy. A number of limitations have arisen spontaneously, and a number of others have been deliberately imposed by us. We undertook the purging of the Party, which means that the most proletarian section of the Party held it to be necessary, in the interests of the revolution, to review and expel from the Party the least reliable section of those members who had obtained entry into the Party without really understanding what the Communist Party is. The purging of the Party has nothing in common with the "pure" principle of "comprehensive" workers' democracy in the actual sense of the words. What kind of democracy is this, when we appoint some few persons from above, and say to them that they shall purge the Party to any extent necessary? And they have done the work thoroughly. More than 100,000 members were excluded from our ranks. There are many who say that this number of expulsions was not sufficient; others say it was too many. Comrades, in some provinces one was true, and in other provinces the other. In general the operation was well performed.

We once passed a resolution that at a Party Congress—I believe it was at the Tenth Congress—not every party member had a right to vote, but only those who had been members of the Party for a certain time (two years).

It might be said that the Central Committee of the Party selects the delegates, curtails the suffrage of the party members just before the Congress at which it is to be criticized and re-elected. Viewed from the standpoint of an abstract workers' democracy, this is a

travesty of all "democracy." But we did this from the viewpoint of the furtherance of the Revolution. We could only permit those to vote who really represented the party advance guard.

We also make long membership of the Party a condition for the appointment of the secretaries of the leading party organizations of the governments, and of the district organizations and of the chairmen of the government trade union soviets. And this is not pure democracy either. In a democracy we elect whom we will. Is this limitation necessary or not? It is necessary! The furtherance of the Revolution, that is the highest law.

The third limitation consists of the confirmation of the appointment of the secretaries by the superior organization. This too, is not pure democracy, and still we do it.

The fourth limitation is the Red Army. For a time there were more than 100,000 party members in the Red Army. In the Red Army we need the spirit of comrade-like discipline, but we cannot accomplish pure democracy there, nor the principle of election. Here we carry on political work on the lines of the Political Divisions. It is impossible to do otherwise. And yet there was a time when the functionaries of the Red Army formed the fourth or third part of the whole Party. Can we give this up in the period of the dictatorship? No! This question must be put as follows: either Red Army or broad workers' democracy. And every revolutionary will say: to the devil with the sacred principles of "pure democracy" so long as we have a real Red Army, really able to defend the interests of the Revolution.

There are thus quite a number of limitations necessarily imposed by the dictatorship of the proletariat. These we must consciously accept.

### **Workers' Democracy and Faction Groupings**

There is still another limitation put on the workers' democracy, the fact that we inhibit the formation of groups and factions within the Party. We often hear the words: we demand freedom of discussion! when what is meant in reality is: we demand freedom to form factions!

The liberty to form groups—has this anything to do with the principles of the workers' democracy? Yes, certain it has much to do with it. A pure workers' democracy demands the freedom to form groups within the Party, for if it is really the case that "we are all equal," if we really possess "full" democracy, then I naturally have the right to gather around me those who think as I do, and to weld them together, etc. This freedom of faction existed at the time of the Second International. There were two or three groups fighting within almost every social democratic party. Lenin and Rosa Luxembourg were only one faction in the Second International, its left faction. And it was the same on an international scale, for 25 years. During the period of the organic development of the Second International such a state of affairs had become a regular rule. But when the Comintern began to organize itself, its first word was: what we now want is not a parliament of opinions, not an "answers to correspondence," but a leading organ, a single leading Communist world organ, for we cannot conquer the bourgeoisie in any other way. But the creation of a single workers' party means that we have to renounce the liberty of factional struggle....

It is frequently asserted that the Tenth Congress is to blame for all the misfortunes which have been encountered by the Party. Why this assertion? It was precisely the Tenth Congress which recognized the freedom of discussion and of consultations in the Party. It was this same Tenth Congress which, however, accepted the proposition made by Comrade Lenin on the prohibition of factions and groups. And it is this which has been displeasing to many.

The policy of the Tenth Congress is the policy of comrade Lenin. It is therefore necessary to recognize clearly that an attack is being made against the foundations of Bolshevik policy, against the principles of Leninism, against its fundamental balance as drawn by the Tenth Congress. And thus the strictest dividing line must be drawn between a freedom of discussion and consultation permitted by the situation, and the liberty to form groups

and factions. It need not be said that this is not to be so interpreted as if we were going to designate every criticism as faction-like. Not in the slightest. By doing this we should simply drive the comrades into factions. Criticism is necessary, unavoidable, and necessary. Those who whine for party "discipline" at every breath of criticism and want to train up a muzzled party, should be laughed at and set aside. But factions are not permissible.

### **The Cultural Level of the Party and of The Non-Partisan Workers.**

#### **The Workers' Democracy Again**

I must now deal with a question which has given rise to some disagreement amongst us: the cultural education of the non-partisan and party workers....

How can the cultural standard be raised? Solely by the perusal of books? No! We can only gain the culture which we require by means of personal and active participation of party members in public life—in the state, the trade unions, and the Party.

If the cultural standard of the party members is to be raised to the level which we require, we need books as well, and courses of instruction, and soviet party schools and workers' universities, besides newspapers and other aids. But this is only one half of what we require, the other 50% consists in the intense participation in the work of the trade unions and Soviets, that is, in the work of the State and the Party.

Why are we so backward? For very simple reasons. The Party has absorbed 10,000 of the best forces from the party nuclei in the shops and factories. I have seen the brief statistical survey of the election to the Petrograd Soviet, in which we see that out of somewhat more than 800 persons, 711 were workers who had been workers until the year 1914, and are now engaged in organizational and administrative work. What kind of people are these? They are the same people who were formerly in the nuclei, and now form part of the state apparatus, since the dictatorship of the proletariat requires it. It naturally follows that if we withdraw tens of thousands of the best workers from the nuclei, the latter are politically at a lower level. This is our misfortune, but not our fault.

Another circumstance must be added: the lack of time. It has been rightly pointed out here that the non-partisan worker has more time at his disposal than our party comrade, who is frequently burdened far beyond his powers, and whose material position is often not so good—he has more financial obligations, more material sacrifices for the Party, for the trade unions, etc. Very often he cannot afford that which the non-partisan worker can afford, and he has besides less time. Thus it happens that we have remained behind here and there, but not by any means everywhere. We must recognize this, or we shall earn that reproach of despicable Communist boasting against which comrade Lenin so rightly warned us.

We must draw two conclusions.

Firstly, those non-partisan workers who have gone through every imaginable course of instruction and who have now, in the seventh year of the Revolution, approached very nearly to us must be admitted into the Party....

This is one solution. The other consists of the following: to exert every effort in aid of the party organizations, to make up for lost time, so that the party rank and file may be raised to a higher level of culture and knowledge.

We can already record definite successes. A considerable stratum of party members is receiving instruction in the workers' universities, in the Communist universities, and in the state Party schools; but this is not enough, it is only a drop in the ocean. The better we get things in order, the more importance we shall attach to this....

### **The Difference of Age Among the Members of the Party**

And now to the difference of age among the members of the Party. This is again one of the most important and interesting problems. What is the present state of affairs? The Party can look back upon a history extending over at least 25 years, and even if we only

calculate from the Second Party Congress, that is, from the time of the decisive split of the Party into Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, still we have 20 years to look back upon. But nine-tenths of the persons composing the Party have not 25 years of Party membership behind them, but only two to three years since the year 1920. This is the main mass of our Party. This is a really remarkable phenomenon. Other parties, formed under conditions of a peaceful parliamentary atmosphere, have developed in a more staid manner. In these parties the development was as follows: The party was formed, worked for one, two, three, or five years, and gradually gathered around it a personal party staff. In our case the process has been reversed. The main mass of our Party did not stream in until after we had overthrown Czarism and Kerensky, and it therefore happens that a Party whose history extends back over 25 years has nevertheless an extremely young personal staff. It has one group which has taken over the work of the last twenty years, and which incorporates the traditions of twenty to twenty five years; it has another group incorporating the five or six year old traditions of the Civil War; and finally it has the main mass, incorporating still younger traditions. This has created an exceedingly characteristic and peculiar situation, which cannot be ignored.

Our fundamental group, representing twenty to twenty five years of development in our Party, and forming the cement holding the Party together, is worthy of the highest place in our esteem, but it is small, it is dying out, and it has not kept up with life in every respect, its not entirely competent for present tasks. A new stratum is arising from the other side, ready to attack broad questions and responsible work with greater rapidity than the old; often it has a perfect right to do this, but often it is insufficiently prepared. It is one of the most intimate problems of the Party to find out the required golden mean for accomplishing the needful amalgamation of our fundamental stratum, incorporating the history of twenty five years, with the new stratum, brought into being by the Party during the Civil War. It is imperative that the right basis of mutual relations be found, for these twenty five years of experience must not be lost to the Party, the gigantic political capital accumulated by the Party during this period must not be squandered in vain, and on the other hand it is equally important that this group of old members throws no obstacles in the way of those young members who are striving for more active participation. It is the task of the old group to transmit its political experience to the young, to further participation in the work under their leadership.

### **The General Situation and Tasks of the Party**

Let us now strike a balance. In regard to the working class our cause is in no bad position; the situation has improved. Confidence in our Party is growing among the working class; if we do not commit any very glaring economic mistakes, we shall gain the confidence of the working class. In any case, there is an increase of confidence in the Party on the whole. That dissatisfaction brought about in summer by the economic situation has proved to be merely an episode. Those organizations which were not able to deal competently with the discontent and strikes in the summer are now being reorganized and strengthened by us.

Our relations with the peasantry have also improved. The peasant nuclei have themselves eliminated many unsuitable elements, and are in a better position than before. With respect to the rest of the population, there is something new to record. There is a great stream of sympathy for the ideas of the Soviet power from among the intelligentsia, lower and higher alike, and from every class of the student youth, not only among our own ranks, but from the ranks of other classes. This is the new element characterizing the present moment, for this was not the case two or three years ago. It is thus beyond question that there is a certain mass movement in our direction. We must utilize this turn of events, and must differentiate two sides of it. It possesses one extremely positive side. These are people who can set our schools upon their feet; the scholars can lend positive aid to our higher

educational establishments, and can do much towards the solution of that problem raised by Comrade Trotsky in his letter to the savants: It is war which rules chemistry and aviation.

Our positive gain lies in the fact that we obtain the support of cultured and semi-cultured strata which can bring us that which we are lacking. And the attendant minus is that we shall be enveloped in the predominantly petty bourgeois influences of these strata, which will take effect upon our Party through a thousand channels unseen except to the most watchful observer. But we are Marxists, and we must be able to observe phenomena at the very moment when their germ is beginning to break the outer husk. We point out these new phenomena to you, and say to you: here is a fresh stream of mass sympathy from the intelligentsia, from the student youth, from the teachers; this sympathy bears witness of our strength; accept it and utilize it for our proposes and tasks. But do not forget that it possesses its negative aspects. Be on your guard.

I am of the opinion that we must not permit the discussion now started to assume the forms of that discussion before the Tenth Party Congress, when Comrade Lenin was obliged to write that the Party has been attacked by a fever, and that the temperature must be lowered. We can no longer allow ourselves this "luxury." In the first place it is entirely unnecessary; we shall pass matured resolutions on the question of the intensification of party work and the inner party democracy—unanimous resolutions. We shall put the workers' democracy courageously into actual practice. Everything which can and must be done will be resolved upon and put into execution without delay. And we cannot allow ourselves this luxury, in the second place, because the international situation is full of tension and responsibility. Each week may bring fresh surprises. The White Guard press is naturally seizing eagerly upon our discussion.

Surprises may await us in the international situation. This must not be forgotten. And then we have the inner party question. At the time before the Tenth Congress we seriously pushed the matter to an extreme. But at that time we had some-one whose opinion was absolutely decisive for the whole of the Party. This was Comrade Lenin. At the present time Comrade Lenin is still so ill that he cannot take any part in our discussion. This throws an even heavier responsibility upon the rest of us. The Central Committee of our Party, which is composed of a group of Comrade Lenin's scholars, has to make the most responsible decisions. At present it is only possible for the Central Committee to work, to carry out responsible functions, to alter the course when circumstances require it, to remove evils in the Party, and to manoeuvre on the international front, when it is conscious of possessing the fullest confidence of the decisive fundamental strata of our Party. We can and will accomplish the realization of the principle of election. We must effect a number of improvements in the spheres of trade union and economic work, and correct a number of mistakes. Our party Central Committee must remain the army staff of the Party. It is only such a staff which is capable of leading the Party during the period of proletarian dictatorship. Here we must consider everything twenty times before acting; every decision must be accorded the most careful thought, and then finally made with that maximum of determination and that maximum of unanimity which is characteristic of our organization.

*International Press Correspondence*, IV, No. 10 (8 February 1924): 70-74.



**"ON BUILDING THE PARTY"—ATTEMPTED COMPROMISE  
BETWEEN TROTSKY AND THE TRIUMVIRATE**

5 December 1923

*The resolution condemning the "Forty-six" and Trotsky (see above 27 October) did not address adequately either the economic issues or the question of party democracy and*

*bureaucracy. During November a number of polemical speeches and articles appeared. Finally the ruling troika and Trotsky attempted to find a common ground in order to prevent the discussions from spreading too extensively throughout the Party, raising awkward questions for all of them (neither Trotsky's letter of October 8 nor the Declaration of the Forty-six had been made public officially, but copies were circulating). The result was a compromise statement, "On Building the Party." It appeared to endorse many of the dissidents' demands for party reform, but it also reaffirmed the ban on factions passed by the Tenth Party Congress; the latter part of the compromise proved to be more important than the reform part. The document was approved unanimously at a joint meeting of the Politburo and the presidium of the Central Control Committee plus party leaders from several large party organizations. It was reaffirmed, without parts Ia) and Ib), at the 13th Party Conference of 16-18 January 1924.*

## ON BUILDING THE PARTY

### I. The Party during the New Economic Policy.

a) The New Economic Policy, which has caused a growth of the productive forces, has proved itself to be a necessary stage on the long protracted transition road from capitalism to socialism. It has contributed to the revival of national economics in general and of the state industry, the state commerce and of the co-operatives in particular. We have witnessed a gradual increase in the rate of wages, a return of qualified proletarians to the towns, a raising of the level of culture among the broad proletarian masses and in particular, the formation of new ranks of proletarian and peasant intellectuals, thanks to the systematic instructions imparted to the workers and peasants in the higher educational establishments.

b) The 12th Congress of the Party, while taking note of the revival of the economic life of the country has at the same time already pointed out the necessity of estimating every stage of the economic development from the point of view of socialist construction. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which cannot be consolidated and developed without an increase in the material prosperity, could not even have maintained itself, if this increase in material prosperity had created a preponderance of private capital over state capital.

The extraordinary difficulties with which the economics of the country are meeting at the present moment, are mainly expressed in the fact that the products of our state industry do not find a sufficient market. If during the last year the disposal of our products has met with ever-increasing difficulties, this to a very great extent is attributable to the extraordinarily high cost of production, to the exceedingly high trading expenses and, in addition, to the unjustifiable methods of an exaggerated computation of prices at the expense of the consumer. The underlying causes of these difficulties are the disparity and the lack of coordination of the various elements in the state economics, both between themselves individually and between themselves as a whole and the market, the irrational or insufficiently rational establishment of industrial and commercial undertakings and the conduct of their operations, in particular the inability of our still bureaucratic commercial and co-operative organizations to reach the rural markets.

The central task remains, as heretofore, the linking up of the state industry with the peasants' agriculture, i.e., in the first place the establishment of proper proportions between the productivity of our state industry on the one hand and the requirements and extent of our mainly rural market on the other. This task can be carried out to the extent to which the linking up of the various factors and elements of the state industry between themselves is appropriately and systematically accomplished.

In view of the foregoing the whole Party must arrive at the conclusion that the continued economic revival, which will enable us to overcome the existing crisis within the more or less near future, will serve the cause of socialist construction only in so far as we learn to coordinate the elements of the state economics in their relations to each other and to the market generally.

From this there arises the unique importance of the "Gosplan," of the economic staff of the socialist state and of all the organizations for carrying out planned economics in the provinces. It is necessary to secure effectually for them the position indicated by the resolution of the 12th Congress.

The measures adopted in recent times in order to reduce the prices of manufactured goods and to promote the export of grain have already led to a certain recovery in the trade turnover and to an increase in the price of grain. The struggle against the fundamental causes of the market crisis demands, however, from the Party a complicated and systematic work for carrying out the measures indicated by the 12th Congress regarding the concentration of industry, appropriate organization of the apparatus of trade and industry, the promotion of agriculture, the raising of its technical level and its adaptation, to the struggle on the world market by various means, among these being the extension of agricultural credit, etc. These tasks are confronting the Party in all their full extent and in a most pressing manner. There is no doubt that the Party will concentrate all its forces in order to carry them out effectively.

c) The objective contradictions presented by the actual stage of the transitory period and which result from the simultaneous existence of the most varied economic forms, from the prevailing market relations, from the necessity for the state institutions to employ capitalistic forms and methods of work, from the necessity of relying for support upon a staff which is still a stranger to the proletariat, etc.—these contradictions find their expression in a whole series of negative tendencies, the fight against which must be placed on the order of the day. Among these tendencies there may be mentioned: striking anomalies in the material situation of Party members, determined by their varying functions and the so-called "wasteful expenditures"; the growth of connections with bourgeois elements and the ideological influence of the latter; the narrowing of the intellectual horizon by officialdom, which must be distinguished from the necessary specialization and, arising therefrom, the weakening of the connections between the Communists working in various spheres; the danger of a loss of the perspectives of socialist construction as a whole and of the world revolution; the danger, already indicated by the Congress, of a "NEP" generation on the part of a portion of the functionaries who, owing to the nature of their activity, come most into contact with bourgeois elements; the process of bureaucratizing which is to be noted in the Party apparatus and, arising therefrom, the threatening danger of the Party losing contact with the masses.

## 2. The Party and the Working Masses.

The confidence of the proletarian masses in the Party has increased. This finds its expression in the Soviet elections, in the collapse of the Menshevik and S.R. parties and in the formation of a body of non-party workers who are actively supporting the Party. At the same time the active Communist workers, who of course should form the connecting link between the Party and the non-party masses, are almost entirely absorbed in administrative and economic work and thereby unavoidably lose contact with the work of production. The fundamental task therefore in this connection is the recruiting of new party members from the ranks of workers at the bench. It is the task of the party organizations to devote special attention to this type of party worker, to do everything possible in order to prevent their being divorced from the work of production, to help them raise the cultural level and use every means to render easier the possibility for them to take effective part in all party affairs. The work of enlarging the proletarian mainstay of the Party must, in the next months, be one of the most important tasks of all party organizations. The initiative of certain organizations which have already developed their activities in this direction must be supported by all industrial organizations of our Party. The Party must render easier the influx of new elements of industrial workers into the party organizations and their promotion

from candidates to party members. In the same way it is necessary to give increased attention to the work among the growing proletarian youth.

Regarding the peasantry, among whom proletarian and semi-proletarian strata are again appearing, it is necessary to improve by every means the qualitative composition of the nuclei, to direct their work into the channel of cultural and political activity, in particular to intensify their work of helping to spread a knowledge of scientific agricultural methods, and also their work in the co-operative field, in the organization of agricultural credits etc. Along with this the village proletariat (especially the committees of landless peasants in the Ukraine) must be given every support, and the proletarian elements must be drawn into our party organization as well as into the All Russian Confederation of Agricultural and Forest Workers.

Among the intelligentsia, as the result of general causes as well as of the improvement of their position in our country while at the same time the middle classes in Germany are being pauperized, there is to be noted a general swing of opinion in favor of the Soviet power. Of particular importance is this turn of opinion among the rural teachers and among the instructors in agriculture, who can be considered as being on of the most important connecting links between town and country. This turn of opinion among broad strata of the intelligentsia in favor of the Soviet power, while being in itself an outstanding positive phenomenon, can, however, also have consequences of a negative character, as it increases the danger of the Communists being ideologically surrounded.

The struggle for the ideological purity of our Party against petty bourgeois and "Smenovekhov" [an organized movement among intellectuals, especially emigrants, in favor of the Soviet power as being the upholder of the independence of Russia] obscurantism is therefore an equally important task of the Party.

### 3. The Party and Workers' Democracy.

The negative phenomena of the last month in the life of the working class on the whole, as well as within the Party involve the unescapable conclusion that the interests of the Party in regard to its struggle against NEP influence, as well as regarding its fighting capacity in all spheres of work, demand a serious change in the policy of the Party in the sense of a real and systematic carrying out of the principles of workers' democracy. In view of this the October Joint Session of the Plenums of the C.C. and the C.C.C. have decided as follows:

"The Plenums of the C.C. and of the C.C.C. entirely approve the policy in the direction of democracy which was recently adopted by the Political Bureau, and they also approve of the intensification of the struggle against 'wasteful expenditures' and against the disintegrating influence of the NEP upon certain elements of the Party, as proposed by the Political Bureau."

Workers' democracy means liberty of frank discussion of the most important questions of the party life by all members and that all leading party functionaries and commissions be elected by those bodies immediately under them. It does not, however, include the liberty of forming faction groups, which are extremely dangerous for a governing party since they continually threaten to split and disintegrate the government and the state apparatus as a whole.

It is obvious that within a party, which represents a voluntary union of people on a definite basis of ideals and practice, there can be no toleration of the formation of groups, the ideological content of which is directed against the Party as a whole and against the dictatorship of the proletariat, as for instance, the "Rabochaia Pravda" (Workers' Truth) and the "Rabochaia Gruppa" (Workers' Group).

Only a constant, vital ideological life can maintain the Party in that condition in which it had arrived at before and during the Revolution, with a continual and critical study of



its past, with the correction of its mistakes and with the collective discussion of the most important questions. It is only these methods which can give effective guarantees against occasional divergences of opinion resulting in the formation of faction groups with all the consequences mentioned above.

In order to avert this the leading party organs must lend an ear to the voice of the masses of the Party, and must not regard every kind of criticism as an indication of the formation of factions, and thereby drive conscious and disciplined party members into aloofness and create in them a spirit of faction forming.

In no circumstances can the Party be regarded as a mere institution or an office, but at the same time it cannot be considered a debating society for every tendency. The 10th Congress laid down the principles of workers' democracy, but the same 10th Congress, and afterwards the 11th and 12th Congresses, also laid down a series of limitations as to the exercise of these principles of proletarian democracy: Forbidding of factions (see resolution of the 10th Congress "On Party Unity" and the corresponding resolution of the 11th Congress); the purging of the Party; limitation of admission to the party membership of non-proletarian elements; the laying down of certain lengths of membership as necessary qualifications for holding certain offices in the Party; the confirmation of the secretaries by the superior Party authority (see Party statute). In view of the unavoidableness of maintaining under the NEP certain limitations in the future also, there must at the same time, based on the experience already acquired, particularly by the inferior organizations, be a re-examination of the fitness of some of these limitations, for instance, of the right of the superior authorities to confirm secretaries. In no circumstances can the right of confirming secretaries be converted into a right of practically appointing them.

#### 4. Immediate Measures for Realizing Workers' Democracy.

In order to prevent the line of the Party from being diverted, in order to realize effectively the workers' democracy and in order to secure for the entire mass of the party members the possibility of systematically influencing the direction of the whole party policy, the following measures must in the first place be realized:

a) Strict observation of the eligibility of functionaries, with the limitations mentioned above; it shall be regarded as inadmissible to impose such functionaries against the will of an organization; in particular there must be a strict observation of the eligibility of secretaries to nuclei;

b) it shall be obligatory to submit all essential questions of party policy, so far as exceptional circumstances shall not render this impossible, for discussion by the party nuclei and by the party masses as a whole; the number of party discussion clubs shall be extended; unjustifiable appeal shall not be made to "party discipline" in the event of it being the right and the duty of the members of the Party to discuss questions in which they are interested and to adopt decisions regarding them;

c) attention must be paid to the task of pushing forward new functionaries from the rank and file, in the first place from among the workers;

d) special attention must be paid to enabling a body of comrades, who are in close contact with the masses of the Party, to acquire a proper conception of the policy of the Party;

e) delivering accounts and reports by the party organs to the bodies by whom they are elected and to the broad party mass;

f) increase in the educational work of the Party, at the same time carefully avoiding by all means all bureaucratic tendencies, among the entire party mass as well as among the Communist Youth Leagues and the women in particular;

g) attention must be paid to the mutual exchange of experience of the functionaries in the various fields of work; compulsory conferences shall be periodically convened by the

C. C., as well as by the provincial and district committees, to be attended by the responsible functionaries in all fields of work;

h) the information of the party members shall be increased by means of the press and by visits to the various localities by members of the C. C., the C. C. C., the provincial and district committees and by members of the collegium of the Commissariats;

i) in the periodical press the column devoted to party life must be increased;

j) at the next party Congress there must be submitted a proposal regarding the convocation of district and all-Russian party conferences twice a year.

In order to secure the effective carrying out of all the measures mentioned above regarding the realization of workers' democracy, there must be a passing from words to deeds by proposing to the lowest nuclei, to the district, area and regional party conferences, to systematically renew the party apparatus from the bottom upwards at the regular party elections, by pushing forward for the responsible posts such functionaries as are able effectively to ensure democracy within the Party.

### 5. On the Control Commissions.

a) The most important tasks for the improvement of the party apparatus have already been put before the Party. This work needs much time in order to yield effective and perceptible results. The basic condition for successful work on the part of the Control Commission and of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, regarding the improvement and purification of the state apparatus, is that they be supported by the whole Party and by its organizations, and that the working masses be drawn into this work. There must be the closest connection between the Control Commissions and the corresponding party committees; every means must be used to increase the interest of the public opinion of the Party and of the working masses for the activity of the Control Commissions and of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

b) The experience of the last months has shown that, besides the Central Control Commissions, questions of the state apparatus must also be dealt with by the local, governmental and provincial Control Commissions, and that the problem of the extension of the functions of the subordinate Control Commissions must therefore receive attention.

c) Among the means for attracting the working masses to the study and to the improvement of the state apparatus, there may be included auxiliary nuclei in the shops and in the state institutions—these nuclei to be set up by the Control Commission and by the Workers' and peasants' Inspection along with the trade unions. The party nuclei in the shops must be closely connected with the auxiliary nuclei to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and supervise their work through the shop committees.

d) A particularly important task of the Control Commissions at the present moment, is the fight against the bureaucratic perversion of the party apparatus and of the party practice, and realization of the principle of workers' democracy in the practice of the party organizations (restricting the liberty of expression at party gatherings, arbitrary limiting of eligibility and the like).

e) Of special importance at the present juncture is the fight of the Control Commissions against the so-called "wasteful expenditures" in the state apparatus and on the part of certain of its officials. The demoralizing influence of the negative aspects of the NEP upon members of our Party, and in particular upon certain responsible functionaries, must be energetically counteracted by the entire Party.

f) There must be a more careful employment of the extreme party disciplinary measures (expulsion from the Party). The greatest leniency must be accorded to industrial workers at the bench, and the most drastic measures (expulsion from the Party) must here only be employed where the circumstances render it unavoidable, i. e., where all other means at the disposal of the Party have been exhausted.

Finally, those who have been previously expelled from the Party, in particular industrial workers, must be accorded really comrade-like treatment when they express a desire to re-enter the Party and when in such cases there is good reason for believing that they will properly fulfill the demands of the Party laid upon them.

#### 6. Party Organization and Work in the Economic Sphere

One of the greatest and most valuable of our advantages is that we have within the ranks of our Party collaborators in all spheres of economic work, from the simplest proletarians at the bench right up to its most responsible administrators. All these functionaries must, and by a proper arrangement of the work they can, contribute their extraordinarily, many-sided collective economic experience towards the creation of the real party management of the work in the economic sphere. Workers in the economic sphere must be accorded in their work a sufficient degree of independence and initiative, together with the full support of the Party. The systematic leadership by the Party must not by any means permit hair-splitting discussions over every casual and secondary matter.

For this purpose it is necessary to bring the Communist nuclei into contact with production; accounts and reports must be regularly given by the Communist workers in the economic spheres; the reports must be discussed as regards their essentials; it is necessary to arrange regular meetings of the Communists in the nuclei of those shops which, taken together, form an economic unity, (for instance, a trust), and also party economic conferences; the representatives of the nuclei are obliged to deliver reports to their respect nuclei regarding these conferences. It is necessary to disseminate much more systematically the experiences and the suggestions of the lowest nuclei.

#### 7. The Work among the Masses and the Attracting of the Masses into Practical Constructive Work

The work of attracting the masses into practical construction must be intensified, particularly in view of the danger of the state apparatus becoming alienated from the masses. For this reason the duty of delivering reports and accounts imposed on workers in the economic sphere must be extended so as to include delivering the same to the masses (general meetings of workers and of their delegates, shop committees, conference of non-party workers and peasants and the like).

Special attention must be also paid to bringing trade unions into contact with production. The influence of the trade unions in the selection and promotion of new candidates for economic positions, and in the control of the work of economic organs, must be increased (of very great importance also is the control regarding the punctual payment of wages and in a proper manner etc.); the trade unions must convene conferences dealing with the question of production by unities (trusts), attended by representatives of the shop committees and of the administrators of the undertakings; the trade unions must render reports on their work in the trade union press, which must be improved and rendered more efficient.

Every means must be employed to increase the efficiency of the institution of workers' reports to the press, carefully preserving it from all bureaucracy and officialdom. The Party and the Soviet periodical press must give the greatest and most considerate heed to the demands and proposals emanating from the masses.

In the elections to the workers' and peasants' councils, attention must be paid to the candidature of new elements, selecting, besides party workers, active non-party workers also, and to drawing the latter into active work (work of the departments of the local soviets, meetings of the departments and of the executive committees with the representatives of the workers and peasants and of the auxiliary nuclei to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, etc.).

The practice of holding large-scale conferences of non-party workers must be extended. It is necessary to facilitate the growth of all kinds of voluntary, self-governing organizations, cultural, educational, sports and the like, particularly those which touch the family and social life of the working masses (communal kitchens etc.), securing for them the possibility of a proper development.

The practice of holding open meetings of the nuclei must be extended, and, based on the experience of these open meetings, there must be selected bodies of those non-party workers and peasants who are to become active helpers of our Party.

*International Press Correspondence*, IV, No. 7 (29 January 1924): 37-40.



## AMERICAN REFUSAL TO RECOGNIZE THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

6-18 December 1923

*In 1923 Soviet Russia carried on negotiations with various governments about trade and other matters which led in early 1924 to diplomatic recognition by the three major victor European powers: Great Britain, France and Italy. The United States, however, refused to establish diplomatic relations. The three documents below are 1) the passage touching upon Soviet Russia from President Calvin Coolidge's message of December 6 to Congress, 2) Chicherin's response raising the issue of normalizing relations, and 3) Secretary of State Charles Evan Hughes response succinctly stating the reasons the United States would not recognize Soviet Russia.*

### I

[President Coolidge's Message to Congress,  
6 December 1923, Excerpt Concerning Russia]

Our diplomatic relations, lately so largely interrupted, are now being resumed, but Russia presents notable difficulties. We have every desire to see that great people, who are our traditional friends, restored to their position among the nations of the earth. We have relieved their pitiable destitution with an enormous charity. Our Government offers no objection to the carrying on of commerce by our citizens with the people of Russia. Our Government does not propose, however, to enter into relations with another regime which refuses to recognize the sanctity of international obligations. I do not propose to barter away for the privilege of trade any of the cherished rights of humanity. I do not propose to make merchandise of any American principles. These rights and principles must go wherever the sanctions of our Government go.

But while the favor of America is not for sale, I am willing to make very large concessions for the purpose of rescuing the people of Russia. Already encouraging evidences of returning to the ancient ways of society can be detected. But more are needed. Whenever there appears any disposition to compensate our citizens who were despoiled, and to recognize that debt contracted with our Government, not by the Czar, but by the newly formed Republic of Russia; whenever the active spirit of enmity to our institutions is abated; whenever there appear works mete for repentance; our country ought to be the first to go to the economic and moral rescue of Russia. We have every desire to help and no desire to injure. We hope the time is near at hand when we can act.

## II

[Commissar for Foreign Affairs Chicherin to President Coolidge]

Moscow, *December 16, 1923.*

It has been the constant endeavor of Soviet government to bring about resumption of friendly relations with United States of America based upon mutual trust. With this end in view it has repeatedly announced its readiness to enter into negotiations with American government and to remove all misunderstandings and differences between the two countries. After reading your message to Congress, the Soviet Government is sincerely anxious to establish at last a firm friendship with the people and government of the United States and informs you of its complete readiness to discuss with your government all problems mentioned in your message, these negotiations being based on principle mutual nonintervention internal affairs. Soviet government will continue whole-heartedly to adhere this principle expecting same attitude from American government. As to question of claims mentioned you message, the Soviet government is fully prepared to negotiate with the view of its satisfactory settlement on the assumption that the principle [of] reciprocity be recognized all round. On its part, the Soviet government is ready to do all in its power so far as the dignity and interests of its country permit to bring about the desired end of renewal of friendship with United States of America.

*People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs*  
Chicherin

## III

[Secretary of State Hughes to the American Consul at Reval (Quarton)]

Washington, *December 18, 1923—12 noon.*

Hand to the Soviet representative at Reval for communication to Chicherin the following:

"With respect to the telegram to President Coolidge from Chicherin of December 16th, the Secretary of State today made the following statement in reply: 'There would seem to be at this time no reason for negotiations. The American Government, as the President said in his message to the Congress, is not proposing to barter away its principles. If the Soviet authorities are ready to restore the confiscated property of American citizens or make effective compensation, they can do so. If the Soviet authorities are ready to repeal their decree repudiating Russia's obligations to this country and appropriately recognize them, they can do so. It requires no conference or negotiations to accomplish these results which can and should be achieved at Moscow as evidence of good faith. The American Government has not incurred liabilities to Russia or repudiated obligations. Most serious is the continued propaganda to overthrow the institutions of this country. This Government can enter into no negotiations until these efforts directed from Moscow are abandoned.'"

Hughes

*Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1923: I, viii-ix; II: 787-88.*



TROTSKY, THE NEW COURSE—I: LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

8-10 December 1923

*The resolution of 5 December was a fragile compromise. Trotsky moved quickly to emphasize publicly the reform aspects, dubbing them a "new course." On 8 December he sent an*

*open letter to the Central Committee, and then enlarged on it on 10 December before its publication. It was a blistering attack on bureaucratic tendencies in the Party and emphasized the important role of the party rank and file members. Trotsky charged that the apparatus had shaken off democratic practices within the Party. Moreover, he linked the organizational and internal problems with the economic problems of the country and called for a new industrial policy. With this Trotsky clearly put himself in the position of opposition leader to the triumvirate. Unfortunately Trotsky was ill during much of the time before and after his letter. Whether for that or other reasons, he was unable to provide either effective defense of his views at the party meetings surrounding the debates or leadership for others dissatisfied with the directions party policies were taking.*

*The New Course*  
(A Letter to Party Meetings)

Dear Comrades,

I had confidently hoped to be recovered soon enough to be able to participate in the discussion of the internal situation and of the new tasks of the party. But my illness came at a more inopportune time than ever before and proved to be of longer duration than the first forecasts of the doctors. There is nothing left but to expound my view to you in the present letter.

The resolution of the Political Bureau on the party organization bears an exceptional significance. It indicates that the party has arrived at an important turning point in its historical road. At turning points, as has been rightly pointed out at many meetings, prudence is required; but firmness and resoluteness are required too. Hesitancy, amorphousness would be the worst forms of imprudence in this case.

Inclined to overestimate the role of the apparatus and to underestimate the initiative of the party, some conservative minded comrades criticize the resolution of the Political Bureau. The Central Committee, they say, is assuming impossible obligations; the resolution will only engender illusions and produce negative results. It is clear that such an approach reveals a profound bureaucratic distrust of the party. The center of gravity which was mistakenly placed in the apparatus by the old course, has now been transferred by the new course, proclaimed in the resolution of the Central Committee, to the activity, the initiative and the critical spirit of all the party members, as the organized vanguard of the proletariat. The new course does not at all signify that the party apparatus is charged with decreeing, creating, or establishing a democratic regime at such and such a date. No. This regime will be realized by the party itself. To put it briefly: the party must subordinate to itself its own apparatus without for a moment ceasing to be a centralized organization.

In the debates and articles of recent times, it has been underlined that "pure," "complete," "ideal" democracy is not realizable and that in general for us it is not an end in itself. That is incontestable. But it can be stated with just as much reason that pure, absolute centralism is unrealizable and incompatible with the nature of a mass party, and that it can no more be an end in itself than can the party apparatus. Democracy and centralism are two faces of party organization. The question is to harmonize them in the most correct manner, that is, the manner best corresponding to the situation. During the last period there was no such equilibrium. The center of gravity wrongly centered in the apparatus. The initiative of the party was reduced to the minimum. Thence, the habits and the procedures of leadership, fundamentally contradicting the spirit of revolutionary proletarian organization. The excessive centralization of the apparatus at the expense of initiative engendered a feeling of uneasiness, an uneasiness which, at the extremities of the party, assumed an exceedingly morbid form and was translated, among other things, in the appearance of illegal groupings directed by elements indubitably hostile to Communism. At the same time, the whole of the party disapproved more and more of apparatus-methods of solving questions. The idea, or at the very least the feeling, that bureaucratism threatened to get the

party into a blind alley, had become pretty general. Voices were raised to point out the danger. The resolution on the new course is the first official expression of the change that has taken place in the party. It will be realized to the degree that the party, that is, its four hundred thousand members, will want to realize it and will succeed in doing so.

In a number of articles, efforts are being made to demonstrate that in order to give life to the party, it is necessary to begin by raising the level of its members after which everything else, that is, workers' democracy, will come of its own accord. It is incontestable that we must raise the ideological level of our party in order to enable it to accomplish the gigantic tasks devolving upon it. But precisely because of this, such a purely pedagogical, professorial way of putting the question is insufficient and, hence, erroneous. To persist in it is to produce unfailingly an aggravation of the crisis.

The party cannot raise its level except by accomplishing its essential tasks, by the collective leadership that displays the initiative of the working class and the proletarian state. The question must be approached not from the pedagogical but from the political point of view. The application of workers' democracy cannot be made dependent upon the degree of "preparation" of the party members for this democracy. A party is a party. We can make stringent demands upon those who want to enter and stay in it; but once they are members, they participate most actively, by that fact, in all the work of the party.

Bureaucratism kills initiative and thus prevents the elevation of the general level of the party. That is its cardinal defect. As the apparatus is made up inevitably of the most experienced and most meritorious comrades, it is upon the political training of the young Communist generations that bureaucratism has its most grievous repercussions. Also, it is the youth, the most reliable barometer of the party, that reacts most vigorously against party bureaucratism.

Nevertheless, it should not be thought that our system of solving questions—settled almost exclusively by the party functionaries—has no influence on the older generation, which incarnates the political experience and the revolutionary traditions of the party. There too the danger is very great. It is not necessary to speak of the immense authority of the group of party veterans, not only in Russia but internationally; that is universally recognized. But it would be a crude mistake to regard it as absolute. It is only by a constant active collaboration with the new generation, within the framework of democracy, that the old guard will preserve the old guard as a revolutionary factor. Of course, it may ossify and become unwittingly the most consummate expression of bureaucratism.

History offers us more than one case of degeneration of the "the old guard." Let us take the most recent and striking example: that of the leaders of the parties of the Second International. We know that Wilhelm Liebknecht, Bebel, Singer, Viktor Adler, Kautsky, Bernstein, Lafargue, Guesde and many others were the direct pupils of Marx and Engels. Yet, we know that in the atmosphere of parliamentarism and under the influence of the automatic development of the Party and the trade union apparatus, all these leaders turned, in whole or in part, to opportunism. We saw that on the eve of the war, the formidable apparatus of the social democracy, covered with the authority of the old generation, had become the most powerful brake upon revolutionary progress. And we, the "elders," we ought to say to ourselves plainly that our generation, which naturally enjoys the leading role in the party, is not absolutely guaranteed against the gradual and imperceptible weakening of the revolutionary and proletarian spirit in its ranks if the party were to tolerate the further growth and stabilization of bureaucratic methods which transform the youth into the passive material of education and inevitably create an estrangement between the apparatus and the mass, the old and the young. The party has no other means to employ against this indubitable danger than a serious, profound, radical change of course toward party democracy and the increasingly large flow into its midst of working-class elements.

I shall not dwell here upon the juridical definitions of party democracy, nor upon the limits imposed upon it by the party statutes. However important they may be, these questions are secondary. We shall examine them in the light of our experience and will introduce into them the necessary modifications. But what must be modified before anything else is the spirit that reigns in our organizations. Every unit of the party must return to collective initiative, to the right of free and comradely criticism—without fear and without turning back—the right of organizational self-determination. It is necessary to regenerate and renovate the party apparatus and to make it feel that it is nothing but the executive mechanism of the collective will.

The party press has recently presented not a few examples that characterize the already ossified bureaucratic degeneration of party morals and relations. The answer to the first word of criticism is: "Let's have your membership card!" Before the publication of the decision of the Central Committee on the "new course," the mere pointing out of the need of modifying the internal party regime was regarded by bureaucratized apparatus functionaries as heresy, as factionalism, as an infraction of discipline. And now the bureaucrats are ready formally to "take note" of the "new course," that is, to nullify it bureaucratically. The renovation of the party apparatus—naturally within the clear-cut framework of the statutes—must aim at replacing the mummified bureaucrats with fresh elements closely linked with the life of the collective, or capable of assuring such a link. And before anything else, the leading posts must be cleared out of those who, at the first word of criticism, of objection, or of protest, brandish the thunderbolts of penalties before the critic. The "new course" must begin by making everyone feel that from now on nobody will dare terrorize the party.

It is entirely insufficient for our youth to repeat our formulae. It must conquer the revolutionary formulae, it must assimilate them, work out its own opinions, its own physiognomy; it must be capable of fighting for its views with the courage which arises out of the depths of conviction and independence of character. Out of the party with passive obedience, with mechanical levelling by the authorities, with suppression of personality, with servility, with careerism! A Bolshevik is not merely a disciplined man; he is a man who in each case and on each question forges a firm opinion of his own and defends it courageously and independently, not only against his enemies, but inside his own party. Today, perhaps, he will be in the minority in his organization. He will submit, because it is his party. But this does not always signify that he is in the wrong. Perhaps he saw or understood before the others did a new task or the necessity of a turn. He will persistently raise the question a second, a third, a tenth time, if need be. Thereby he will render his party a service, helping it meet the new task fully armed or carry out the necessary turn without organize upheavals, without factional convulsions.

Yes, our party would be unable to discharge its historic mission if it were chopped up into factions. That should not and will not happen. It will not decompose in this way because, autonomous collective that it is, its organism resists it. But it will combat successfully the danger of factionalism only by developing and consolidating the new course toward workers' democracy. Bureaucratism of the apparatus is precisely one of the principal sources of factionalism. It ruthlessly represses criticism and drives the discontentment back into the depths of the organization. It tends to put the label of factionalism upon any criticism, any warning. Mechanical centralism is necessarily complemented by factionalism, which is at once a malicious caricature of democracy and a potential political danger.

Conscious of the situation, the party will accomplish the necessary turn with the firmness and the decision demanded by the tasks devolving upon it. By the same token, it will raise its revolutionary unity to a higher level, as a pledge permitting it to accomplish its immeasurably significant national and international tasks.



I am far from having exhausted the question. I deliberately refrained from examining here several essential aspects, out of fear of taking up too much of your time. But I hope that I shall soon succeed in recovering from malaria which—to judge from myself—is in clear opposition to the new course. Then I hope to be able, orally, to do what was not possible in this letter—more fully to supplement and elaborate my views.

With comradely greetings, L. Trotsky.

Dec. 8, 1923

P.S.—The publication of this letter in *Pravda* having been postponed for two days, I take advantage of the delay to add a few supplementary remarks.

I have learned from some comrades that, during the reading of my letter to the district meetings, certain comrades expressed the fear that my considerations on the relationships between the “old guard” and the young generation might be exploited to counterpose (!) the youth to the old. Unquestionably, this apprehension could have assailed only those who, but two or three months ago, rejected with horror the very idea of the necessity of a change in orientation.

At any rate, to place apprehensions of this type in the foreground at the present moment and in the present situation denotes a lack of understanding of the real dangers and of their relative importance. The present mood of the youth, symptomatic to the highest degree, is engendered precisely by the methods employed to maintain “calm” which are formally condemned by the resolution unanimously adopted by the Political Bureau. In other words, “calm,” as it was understood, threatened the leading faction with increasing estrangement from the younger Communists, that is, from the vast majority of the party.

A certain tendency of the apparatus to think and to decide for the whole organization leads to seating the authority of the leading circles exclusively upon tradition. Respect for tradition is incontestably a necessary element of Communist training and party cohesion, but it can be a vital factor only if it is nurtured and fortified constantly by an active check-up on this tradition, that is, by the collective elaboration of the party's policy for the present moment. Otherwise, it may degenerate into a purely official sentiment, and be nothing more than a hollow form. Such a link between the generations is obviously insufficient and most fragile. It may appear to be solid right up to the moment when it is ready to break. That is precisely the danger of the policy of “calm” in the party.

And, if the veterans who are not yet bureaucratized, who have still kept a revolutionary spirit alive (that is, we are convinced, the vast majority), become clearly aware of the danger pointed out above and help the party with all their strength to apply the resolution of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, every reason for counterpoising the generations in the party will disappear. It would then be relatively easy to calm the passions, the possible “excesses” of the youth. But what is necessary first of all is to act so that the tradition of the party is not concentrated in the leading apparatus, but lives and is constantly renewed in the daily experience of the organization as a whole. By doing this, another danger will be parried: that of the division of the old generation into “functionaries,” charged with maintaining “calm,” and non-functionaries. No longer enclosed within itself, the party apparatus, that is, its organic skeleton, far from being weakened, will find itself growing stronger. And it is beyond dispute that we need in our party a powerful centralized apparatus.

It may perhaps be objected that the example of the degeneration of the social democracy which I cited in my letter, is incorrect in view of the profound differences in epochs: yesterday's stagnant reformism and today's revolutionary epoch. Naturally, an example is only an example and not at all an identity. Nevertheless, this indiscriminating contrast of epochs does not in itself decide anything. Not for nothing do we point to the dangers of the NEP, which are closely linked with the retardation of the world revolution. Our daily practical state work, which is more and more detailed and specialized, conceals, as the resolution of the Central Committee points out, a danger of the narrowing down of our horizon, that is, of opportunistic degeneration. It is quite plain that these dangers become

all the more serious the more bossing by "secretaries" tends to replace the genuine leadership of the party. We would be shabby revolutionaries if we were to rely upon the "revolutionary character of the epoch" for the overcoming of our difficulties, and above all of our internal difficulties. This "epoch" must be assisted by the rational realization of the new orientation unanimously proclaimed by the Political Bureau.

To conclude, one more remark. Two or three months ago, when the questions that are the object of the present discussion had not yet appeared on the order of the day of the party, some responsible comrades from the provinces shrugged their shoulders indulgently and told themselves that these are Moscow inventions; in the provinces all goes well. Even now this tone is reflected in certain correspondence from the provinces. To contrast the tranquil and reasonable province to the turbulent and contaminated capital, is to display that same bureaucratic spirit we spoke about above. In reality, the Moscow organization is the largest, the strongest, the most vital of all our party organizations. Even at the dullest moments of so-called "calm" (the word is a very expressive one, and should not fail to enter our party history!), its activity has been more intense than anywhere else. If Moscow is distinguished now from other points in Russia, it is only in that it has taken the initiative in reexamining the course of our party. That's a merit and not a defect. The whole party will follow in its footsteps and will proceed to the necessary reevaluation of certain values of the current period. The less the provincial party apparatus resists this movement, the more easily will the local organizations traverse this inevitable stage of fruitful criticism and self-criticism whose results will be translated in to a growth of the cohesion and an elevation of the ideological level of the party.

L. Trotsky.

Trotsky, *The New Course*: 89-98.



#### ZINOVIEV'S REJOINDER TO TROTSKY'S "NEW COURSE" LETTER

15 December 1923

*Zinoviev immediately responded to Trotsky's "New Course" letter of 8-10 December (see above). Indeed, Zinoviev played the leading role in attacking Trotsky and other opposition figures at this time, while Stalin took a publicly less prominent role. Zinoviev delivered this speech to a meeting of officials of the Petrograd organization of the Party, which he headed. The first part is omitted; it explained—tendentiously—why the Central Committee was taking up the question of internal party democracy, carefully avoiding any indication that it might be in response to criticisms and also tying its position to the Tenth Congress decision banning factions and thus to Lenin (see Volume II of Documents of Soviet History for the resolution "On Unity"). Zinoviev then turned to a direct attack on Trotsky and a defense of the Party apparatus, which is the section given here. The reference to an agreement reached with Trotsky is to the 5 December resolution "On Building the Party" (given above).*

G. Zinoviev

*The Struggle for the Party*

#### VI. Comrade Trotsky's "New Course"

We have before us an article by Comrade Trotsky, one which has been published in our newspapers under the title of the "The New Course." Unfortunately, this article is not expressed clearly either, and it is not possible for everyone to understand it immediately.

I have even come across individuals who maintain that Comrade Trotsky supports the resolution of the Central Committee in this article. Of course it is nothing new that the rope "supports" the man being hanged.

Comrade Trotsky's authority is as undoubted as the services he has rendered to the Party. Among ourselves there is no need to waste words upon this. But mistakes are mistakes, and remain so. When I made a mistake, I was pulled up sharply by the Party; Bukharin, too, had to undergo the same experience. When Comrade Trotsky committed grave errors in the year 1921, Comrade Lenin published two pamphlets on Trotsky's errors. Discussions were held all over Russia, and Comrade Trotsky was slightly in the minority at the Party Congress.

And now we must go into this question in its essentials, without regard for the former services of those who commit errors.

I repeat, that Comrade Trotsky's article is most vaguely expressed. But we, the majority of the Central Committee, distinctly see in it no support, but a thwarting of the line followed by the Central Committee and its unanimous decisions. We worked in collaboration with Comrade Trotsky for a whole week on the resolution, in commissions and sub-commissions. It need not be said that every possible concession was made in order to arrive at an agreement with Comrade Trotsky, for we lay very great value on his agreement. Who can fail to appreciate Comrade Trotsky's enormous authority in the Party? We reached an agreement. And what happened? The unanimously passed resolution was published, and the next day this article by Comrade Trotsky appeared, undoubtedly violating this unanimity.

You are naturally entitled to demand from me proof in confirmation of my assertion that Comrade Trotsky's article is in contradiction to the resolution of the Central Committee. I therefore pass to this proof.

## VII. What is the Party?

It will be known to you that "Trotskyism" represents a certain trend in the Russian labor movement. What was the essential character of the old "Trotskyism"? I shall not go here into the peasant question, but shall deal with the questions occupying us in the immediate present. For instance, the question of what the Party is, the question of what inner party democracy is, the question of what attitude we are to adopt towards factions. Before entering our Party, Comrade Trotsky fought with the whole of his characteristic passion for the idea that the labor party has to represent a conglomeration of various tendencies, various factions, various groups, and various currents. At that time we even employed a special term, invented by Vladimir Ilyich: "currenters," as a designation for those who pursued special "currents." In the liquidation question, Comrade Trotsky repeatedly asserted that he fundamentally supported the liquidation idea. At first he admitted that it was wrong in many points, but still he held the liquidation idea to be a "permissible gradation" in the labor party. Many old comrades will recollect these words on the "permissible gradation," which I here adduce exactly as they were spoken: "In a word, let us live and let live. The Party is a conglomeration of separate factions and currents."

Even at that time we replied: No, we cannot adopt this formula of "live and let live" as a rule of conduct. We said: "If the working class is to be victorious, there must be one united and steered Bolshevik party, and we cannot allow the liquidators, the Mensheviks, to go on working as they think best." They must be wiped out. (Applause.) This was the reason of the strike at the time when Comrade Trotsky issued the newspaper named *Pravda* in Vienna. At that time we published the labor paper *Pravda* in Petrograd, with the aid of the workers' pence.

Is it possible for us to adopt the "live and let live" standpoint in the question of the "currents"? Now, as then we reply: No, for the Party cannot become a Noah's ark, where there are two of each kind; the Party must not become a conglomeration of separate groups

and currents. The Party, working under the conditions created by the New Economic Policy, that is, under fairly variegated conditions, must be a united Bolshevik party of the old Leninist type. Otherwise, we are condemned to decay.

The chief error committed by Comrade Trotsky in his article, "The New Course," consists of the fact that it contains a certain revival, a certain renaissance of the old views which recognized the "permissibility" of separate currents and gradations. "Let us live and let live"; it does not matter if varying opinions exist, we shall all manage together in the end. Of course, this sounds very democratic. We may represent the matter somewhat as follows: On one side there stand the bloodthirsty old Bolsheviks, who will not allow other people to "live," and on the other side stand the good people with their motto of "live and let live" goodness. But, Bolshevism was not founded on angelic goodness, it was formed by the proletarian distrust of everything not belonging to Bolshevism, of everything which was not Leninism. Why did the Mensheviks go so miserably bankrupt? In the first place, of course, for the reason that they were opportunists, but also for the reason that under their rule the party was formed on the mosaic-work principle: two of every kind, their whole party a conglomeration of currents. You will remember that Chernov boasted that they had right socialists and left socialists in their ranks, that they valued freedom of criticism, etc. Indeed, for several months they enjoyed an extraordinary "freedom of speech"; but where are they now and what has become of their party? The same would have happened to us, had we not opposed irreconcilably everything which was not Leninist Bolshevism.

### VIII. Our Party Apparatus

Comrade Trotsky brings the whole might of this argumentation to bear against our Party apparatus, and writes: "The new course does not by any means signify that the Party apparatus is set the task of decreeing, creating, or establishing the regime of "democracy" within any definite term." And we read further in italics: "The Party must subordinate to itself its apparatus." Then comes an exposition to the effect that a number of "party workers" should be reduced to the ranks. I am by no means an unconditional worshipper of the apparatus and party workers at any price, I have never counted myself among them, and I have attacked them as often as anyone else. I have attacked bureaucracy severely, both in our Soviet press and at the All-Russian Soviet Congress. I know the weak sides of our party apparatus very well, and know that this must be renewed, and democratized from below; but when I have to look on and see Preobrazhensky, Sapronov, and Rafail cry out against the "party workers" at every turn, and that they employ the term almost as much as an invective as the term "Chekist" is used by the Mensheviks, then we step forward, and beg the Party to count us among the ranks of the unhappy "party workers." You may as well know, comrades, that when the term "party workers" is used, the Central Committees of the Party is meant: the Central Committee of the Party stamps its mark on everything.

When we turn to statistics, we see that in the whole of this, our terrible apparatus of the Union of Socialist Republics, which comprises one sixth of the globe, there are 18,000 party workers, the greater number of which are technical workers, including a large number of retiring and honest worker bees, who work on the spots where they have been placed by the Party. For indeed, though it be a disgrace to be an official and a party worker in the despicable Menshevik machine, it is not disgrace whatever to be a "party worker" in the proletarian apparatus of the Communist Party. Comrade Lenin censured the state apparatus, the whole Soviet machine. He said that it was still in part the old Czarist apparatus, which we had not succeeded in remodelling and he censured this apparatus so severely that there was no point left unscathed. And to whom did he appeal? To the party apparatus. He submitted a definite plan for the reorganization of the Workers' and Peasants' Control, and of the Central Control Commission. And if there was anything rotten in the Soviet state, then all eyes always turned to the party apparatus, for nowhere else was protection from

bureaucracy to be found. We must renew and reform our apparatus. Those comrades who maintain that our people remain too long in the apparatus are wrong. It is rather the contrary which is the case. Even in the Central Committee, in which the qualified party workers are gathered together, 90 out of 134 responsible workers have been working for less than a year. Thus Party workers do not only not remain too long, but have not even time for the preparation required if they are to work fully into the great apparatus of the present day.

We, comrades, are "provincials." In Petrograd we have just begun with the re-election of the collective bureaus, of the secretaries; we are of the opinion that this is in accordance with the spirit of democracy, and that by this means the apparatus receives the necessary renewal from below. But it is utterly wrong to condemn the apparatus wholesale. A short time ago we conquered the Far East, and we had to form a new government there. It was necessary to create a Soviet apparatus, a party apparatus, and an economic apparatus, etc. At the beginning we naturally did this by appointing suitable persons through the medium of our apparatus. And what else could we have done? How could we govern the state otherwise?

We do not want to assert, comrades, that ideal conditions obtain amongst us. It goes without saying that we have our faults like everyone else, and our apparatus is no more immune from rust than other machinery; it must be cleaned and polished, re-oiled, some few small wheels replaced. But there is no need to throw the baby away with the bath water. And it is here that Comrade Trotsky commits his greatest error, for he is beginning to support people who want to do away with the main core of the Party apparatus. What is the meaning of the phrase: "The Party must subordinate to itself its apparatus?" Has the reverse been the case up to now? Comrade Kalinin was indeed right when he said, during a discussion at Moscow: "A few years ago the Mensheviks called us 'committee workers,' and in the mouths of the Mensheviks this was severe invective; and now you are implying with 'party workers' the same as the Mensheviks meant at that time with 'committee workers.'"

Yes, comrades, there is much in our apparatus which must be improved, renewed, and purified. Bureaucracy must be removed. But those who want to depose the apparatus wholesale must be put in their place, for our party apparatus is the right hand of the Party.

### IX. The "Old Guard" and the Youth

Our next difference of opinion with Comrade Trotsky refers to that passage in his article in which he says: "A degeneration of the 'Old Guard' is to be observed several times in the development of history. Let us take the most recent and most striking historical example: the leaders and the parties of the Second International. We know perfectly well that Wilhelm Liebknecht, Bebel, Singer, Victor Adler, Kautsky, Bernstein, Lafargue, Guesde and others have been direct and immediate disciples of Marx and Engels. We know, however, that all these leaders—some partially others totally—have, in the atmosphere of parliamentary reform and of the strong growth of the party and trade unions apparatus, degenerated towards opportunism." Bebel, Lafargue, and other dead leaders, who cannot defend themselves, are simply cited to point a moral; it was hardly possible to name the members of the Political Bureau, and therefore Bebel, Lafargue, and others are adduced. This is clear to each and everyone. And which disciples are meant is equally clear. Comrade Trotsky steps forwards and says: You are the immediate disciples of Lenin; the disciples of Marx went over to the side of the bourgeoisie under the influence of parliamentary conditions, from which we may conclude that the same may happen to you. Of course we cannot take a patent preventative that nothing of the kind could ever happen to us. Should that which Comrade Trotsky is frightening us with really occur, the Party will turn us out ruthlessly enough. But what has really happened to us? Of all the persons adduced

by Comrade Trotsky, the only ones still living are Kautsky and Bernstein, and these too are mere political corpses adorning the very extreme right wing of the Schiedemann party, although they are both disciples of Marx and Engels. It is with these that we are compared, and the comparison is drawn in the hope that a shadow will thus be cast on the political trend of the majority of the Central Committee.

The rule of the bourgeoisie and parliament spoils people. That is true. But fortunately these elements do not obtain amongst us, and our past is cleaner than that of Kautsky and Bernstein, and we are carved from another wood altogether....

The third passage in Comrade Trotsky's letter which calls for special objections on our part is that in which he speaks of the youth. This is an especially wide and delicate question, and cannot be passed over in silence. Comrade Trotsky expresses himself as follows: "Since the Party apparatus is unavoidably constituted out of the most experienced and proved comrades, the worst consequences of the bureaucratism of the apparatus will be its influence on the ideological-political formation of the young generation of the Party. It is precisely owing to this circumstance that the youth—the surest barometer of the Party—reacts against that party bureaucratism in the most energetic manner." In other words, the question dealt with is that of the Party generations, of the fundamental core—the old Bolshevik guard and the youth.

I have already quoted the main figures referring to the various ages represented among party members. We are fully convinced that there are no differences of opinion between us and our young guard, and that there cannot be any. In no case must we permit the old Bolsheviks to hold the young in tutelage. This would be the most foolish thing which could be done. It is ridiculous to suppose that we could act in the manner of those people who say: The chicken must not try to teach the hen; do what you elders say, do as papa and mamma tell you. We are the disciples of Comrade Lenin, and know that given like conditions, the rule is valid which says the younger, the better. We know that the day must come when we shall be relieved of our posts, that we old Communists will be followed by the coming generation. It is incumbent on us to help this younger generation, to transmit to it the political experience gained by the Party during long decades. It is the task of the Party to prepare the way for the coming generation, to give it the opportunity of learning, so that it may be able to render service to the country later on.

I call to your minds the demagogic observation made by Preobrazhensky, to the effect that the students who had passed through the Sverdlov University gain culture and Marxist knowledge, but that this knowledge is of no use to them if they cannot apply it to real life. We know that all the best of the Sverdlov scholars and students of our universities hold circles, and participate in party work. And it is well that they do so! But to assert that there is not room in our country for the application of Marxist knowledge, in a country where we have so many illiterates and political untaught; to assert to the youthful members that they will never be able to apply their knowledge, for the Party prevents them—that is bad demagogy, comrades.

When Comrade Preobrazhensky makes such assertions it is at least incautious of Comrade Trotsky to make the observation which he does with regard to the youth, especially if we consider the circumstances under which he makes it. Comrade Trotsky makes another grave mistake here. It is not correct to regard this youth as a barometer which the Central Committee has to take as rule of conduct. The barometer according to which the Central Committee has to regulate its actions is the workers in the workshops and factories. It is not our intention to depreciate the value of the other groups in the least. But if we are speaking of who is the "weather maker" for the Party, then it is a matter of course that this role is played by the workers. We seek these workers both in the nuclei and at their work. The youth question has become particularly acute at the present time and we must come to a definite agreement. Should anyone succeed in erecting a partition between the main

core of the Party and the youth, this partition would naturally be a great misfortune for us. We are therefore convinced that the overwhelming majority of the really proletarian youth, now learning under the guidance of the Party, will discern the intrinsic character of our differences of opinion, and will say to those who laud youth: Do not praise us too much, we are not going to allow ourselves to be divided from the old fundamental core of the Party. We want to learn from the old main core of the Bolshevik Party; I think that the great majority of the youthful members will speak thus and they will be right.

### X. Conclusion

I have not touched upon every point of dispute which might arise from Comrade Trotsky's article. His article is one which is not easily forgotten. In the old Bolshevik days we should have placed every sentence of the article under the magnifying glass and not left one stone upon another, as Bolshevism was accustomed to treat wrong programmatic articles. We regret that Comrade Trotsky should have violated the unanimity once arrived at by the unanimously accepted resolution of the Central Committee, and should have come forward with such an article. This article will be debated and re-debated everywhere. A discussion has begun all over Russia. But everything has its good side. The whole Party, including our Petrograd organization, will consider the questions raised in this article. I hope that our organization will give a clear and definite reply to these questions. The composition of the Central Committee of our Party is well known to you, you know that it is the pick of the Party, sifted out 25 years ago. The whole Central Committee is agreed now even more than in Lenin's time, that Comrade Trotsky is still committing a fundamental political error, as he did at the Tenth Party Congress, when Comrade Lenin was obliged to oppose him.

But it need not be said that however much we may differ in opinion from Comrade Trotsky in a number of questions, Comrade Trotsky is and remains one of our most authoritative leaders. Whatever comes, Comrade Trotsky's co-operation in the Political Bureau and other organs is indispensable. And this is secured. Do not believe any rumors, legends, etc. There have been difference of opinion, and always will be. The Party will decide who is right, but we shall continue to work unanimously together.

We must make careful decision on all questions raised, and pay no heed to the malicious joy of our enemies, the Social Revolutionaries, the White Guards, the Mensheviks. We are fully convinced that the unity of our Party is secure. Naturally, we need more than mere external unity, we need unity on the basis of Lenin's views. I call upon our Petrograd organization—the oldest organization of the Bolsheviks—to exercise this unity!

*International Press Correspondence*, IV, No. 12 (15 February 1924): 92-94.



### STALIN RESPONDS TO THE CRITICS OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP

15 December 1923

*Zinoviev, Stalin, and others of the dominant party leadership responded vigorously to their critics during the debates of December. That the critics were not a single bloc and in fact represented several viewpoints is acknowledged by Stalin in this essay, published in Pravda, in which he separated the various strands of the opposition and attacked each one.*

## V. I Stalin

*The Discussion, Rafail, the Articles by Preobrazhensky and Sapranov, and Trotsky's Letter The Discussion*

The discussion on the situation within the Party that opened a few weeks ago is evidently drawing to a close; that is, as far as Moscow and Petrograd are concerned. As is known, Petrograd has declared in favor of the line of the Party. The principal districts of Moscow have also declared in favor of the Central Committee's line. The general city meeting of active workers of the Moscow organization held on December 11 fully endorsed the organizational and political line of the Central Committee of the Party. There is no ground for doubting that the forthcoming general Party conference of the Moscow organization will follow in the footsteps of its districts. The opposition, which is a bloc of a section of the "Left" Communists (Preobrazhensky, Stukov, Pyatakov, and others) with the so-called Democratic Centralists (Rafail, Sapronov, and others), has suffered a crushing defeat.

The course of the discussion, and the changes that the opposition went through during the period of the discussion, are interesting.

The opposition began by demanding nothing more nor less than a revision of the main line in internal Party affairs and internal Party policy which the Party has been pursuing during the past two years, during the whole N.E.P. period. While demanding the full implementation of the resolution passed by the Tenth Congress on internal Party democracy, the opposition at the same time insisted on the removal of the restrictions (prohibition of groups, the Party-standing rule, etc.) that were adopted by the Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Party Congresses. But the opposition did not stop at this. It asserted that the Party has practically been turned into an army type of organization, that Party discipline has been turned into military discipline, and demanded that the entire staff of the Party apparatus be shaken up from top to bottom, that the principal responsible workers be removed from their posts, etc. Of strong language and abuse of the Central Committee there was, of course, no lack. The columns of *Pravda* were replete with articles, long and short, accusing the Central Committee of all the mortal sins. It is a wonder that it was not accused of causing the earthquake in Japan.

During this period the Central Committee as a whole did not intervene in the discussion in the columns of *Pravda*, leaving the members of the Party full freedom to criticize. It did not even think it necessary to repudiate the absurd charges that were often made by critics, being of the opinion that the members of the Party are sufficiently politically conscious to decide the questions under discussion themselves.

That was, so to speak, the first period of the discussion.

Later, when people got tired of strong language, when abuse ceased to have effect and the members of the Party demanded a business-like discussion of the question, the second period of the discussion set in. This period opened with the publication of the resolution of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission on Party affairs [on 5 December — R.W.]. On the basis of the decision of the October Plenum of the Central Committee, which endorsed the course towards internal Party democracy, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee and the Presidium of the Central Control Commission drew up the well-known resolution indicating the conditions for giving effect to internal Party democracy. This marked a turning point in the discussion. It now became impossible to keep to general criticism. When the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission presented their concrete plan the opposition was faced with the alternative of either accepting this plan or of presenting a parallel, equally concrete, plan of its own for giving effect to internal Party democracy. At once it was discovered that the opposition was unable to counter the Central Committee's plan with a plan of its own that would satisfy the demands of the Party organizations. The opposition began to retreat. The demand for



cancellation of the main line of the past two years in internal Party affairs, ceased to be part of the opposition's arsenal. The demand of the opposition for the removal of the restrictions on democracy that were adopted by the Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Party Congresses also paled and faded. The opposition pushed into the background and moderated its demand that the apparatus be shaken up from top to bottom. It deemed it wise to substitute for all these demands the proposals that it was necessary "to formulate precisely the question of factions," "to arrange for the election of all Party bodies which hitherto have been appointed," "to abolish the appointment system," etc. It is characteristic that even these much moderated proposals of the opposition were rejected by the Krasnaya Presnya and Zamoskvorechye district Party organizations, which endorsed the resolution of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission by overwhelming majorities.

This was, so to speak, the second period of the discussion.

We have now entered the third period. The characteristic feature of this period is the further retreat, I would say the disorderly retreat, of the opposition. This time, even the latter's faded and much moderated demands have dropped out of its resolution. Preobrazhensky's last resolution (the third, I think), which was submitted to the meeting of active workers of the Moscow organization (over 1,000 present), read as follows:

"Only the speedy, unanimous and sincere implementation of the Political Bureau's resolutions, and, in particular, the renovation of the internal Party apparatus by means of new elections, can guarantee our Party's transition to the new course without shocks and internal struggle, and strengthen the actual solidarity and unity of its ranks."

The fact that the meeting rejected even this very innocuous proposal of the opposition cannot be regarded as accidental. Nor as it an accident that the meeting, by an overwhelming majority, adopted a resolution "to endorse the political and organizational line of the Central Committee."

### Rafail

I think that Rafail is the most consistent and thorough-going representative of the present opposition, or, to be more exact, of the present opposition bloc. At one of the discussion meetings Rafail said that our Party has practically been turned into an army organization, that its discipline is army discipline, and that, in view of this, it is necessary to shake up the entire Party apparatus from top to bottom, because it is unfit and alien to the genuine Party spirit. It seems to me that these or similar thoughts are floating in the minds of the members of the present opposition, but for various reasons they dare not express them. It must be admitted that in this respect Rafail has proved to be bolder than his colleagues in the opposition.

Nevertheless, Rafail is absolutely wrong. He is wrong not only from the formal aspect, but also, and primarily, in substance. If our Party has indeed been turned, or is even only beginning to be turned, into an army organization, is it not obvious that we would now have neither a Party in the proper sense of the term, nor the dictatorship of the proletariat, nor the revolution?

What is an army?

An army is a self-contained organization built from above. The very nature of an army presupposes the existence at its head of a General Staff, which is appointed from above, and which forms the army on the principle of compulsion. The General Staff not only forms the army, but also supplies it with food, clothing, footwear, etc. The material dependence of the entire army on the General Staff is complete. This, incidentally, is the basis of that army discipline, breach of which entails a specific form of the supreme penalty—death by shooting. This also explains the fact that the General Staff can move the army wherever and whenever it pleases, guided only by its own strategic plans.

What is the Party?

The Party is the advanced detachment of the proletariat, built from below on the voluntary principle. The Party also has its General Staff, but it is not appointed from above, it is elected from below by the whole Party. The General Staff does not form the Party; on the contrary, the Party forms its General Staff. The Party forms itself on the voluntary principle. Nor does there exist that material dependence of the Party as a whole upon its General Staff that we spoke of above in relation to the army. The Party General Staff does not provide the Party with supplies, does not feed and cloth it. This, incidentally, explains the fact that the Party General Staff cannot move the ranks of the Party arbitrarily wherever and whenever it pleases, that the Party General Staff can lead the Party as a whole only in conformity with the economic and political interests of the class of which the Party is itself a part. Hence the specific character of Party discipline, which, in the main, is based on the method of persuasion, as distinct from army discipline, which, in the main, is based on the method of compulsion. Hence the fundamental difference between the supreme penalty in the Party (expulsion) and the supreme penalty in the army (death by shooting).

It is sufficient to compare these two definitions to realize how monstrous is Rafail's mistake.

The Party, he says, has been turned into an army organization. But how is it possible to turn the Party into an army organization if it is not materially dependent upon its General Staff, if it is built from below on the voluntary principle, and if it itself forms its General Staff? How, then, can one explain the influx of workers into the Party, the growth of its influence among the non-Party masses, its popularity among working people all over the world?

One of two things:

*Either* the Party is utterly passive and voiceless—but then how is one to explain the fact that such a passive and voiceless party is the leader of the most revolutionary proletariat in the world and for several years already has been governing the most revolutionary country in the world?

*Or* the Party is active and displays initiative—but then one cannot understand why a party, which is so active, which displays such initiative, has not by now overthrown the military regime in the Party, assuming that such a regime actually reigns in the Party.

Is it not clear that our Party, which has made three revolutions, which routed Kolchak and Denikin, and is now shaking the foundations of world imperialism, that this Party would not have tolerated for one week that military regime and order-and-obey system that Rafail talks about so lightly and recklessly, that it would have smashed them in a trice, and would have introduced a new regime without waiting for a call from Rafail?

But: a frightful dream, but thank God only a dream. The fact of the matter is, firstly, that Rafail confused the Party with an army and an army with the Party, for, evidently, he is not clear in his mind about what the Party and what an army is. Secondly, the fact of the matter is that, evidently, Rafail himself does not believe in his discovery; he is forced to utter "frightful" words about an order-and-obey system in the Party so as to justify the principal slogans of the present opposition: a) freedom to form factional groups; and b) removal from their posts of the leading elements of the Party from top to bottom.

Evidently, Rafail feels that it is impossible to push through these slogans without the aid of "frightful" words.

That is the whole essence of the matter.

#### Preobrazhensky's Article

Preobrazhensky thinks that the chief cause of the defects in internal Party life is that the main Party line in Party affairs is wrong. He asserts that "for two years now, the Party has been pursuing an essentially wrong line in its internal Party policy," that "the Party's main line in internal Party affairs and internal Party policy during the N.E.P. period" has proved to be wrong.

What has been the Party's main line since the N.E.P. was introduced? At its Tenth Congress, the Party adopted a resolution on workers' democracy. Was the Party right in adopting such a resolution? Preobrazhensky thinks it was right. At the same Tenth Congress the Party imposed a very severe restriction on democracy in the shape of the ban on the formation of groups. Was the Party right in imposing such a restriction? Preobrazhensky thinks that the Party was wrong, because, in his opinion, such a restriction shackles independent Party thinking. At the Eleventh Congress the Party imposed further restrictions on democracy in the shape of the definite Party-standing rule, etc. The Twelfth Party Congress only reaffirmed these restrictions. Was the Party right in imposing these restrictions as a safeguard against petty-bourgeois tendencies under the conditions created by the N.E.P.? Preobrazhensky thinks that the Party was wrong, because, in his opinion, these restrictions shackled the initiative of the Party organizations. The conclusion is obvious: Preobrazhensky proposes that the Party's main line in this sphere that was adopted at the Tenth and Eleventh Congresses under the conditions created by the N.E.P. should be rescinded.

The Tenth and Eleventh Congresses, however, took place under the direct leadership of Comrade Lenin. The resolution of the Tenth Congress prohibiting the formation of groups (the resolution on unity) was moved and steered through the Congress by Comrade Lenin. The subsequent restrictions on democracy in the shape of the definite Party-standing rule, etc., were adopted by the Eleventh Congress with the close participation of Comrade Lenin. Does not Preobrazhensky realize that, in effect, he is proposing that the Party line under the conditions created by the N.E.P., the line that is organically connected with Leninism, should be rescinded? Is not Preobrazhensky beginning to understand that his proposal to rescind the Party's main line in Party affairs under the conditions created by the N.E.P. is, in effect, a repetition of some of the proposals in the notorious "anonymous platform," which demanded the revision of Leninism?

It is sufficient to put these questions to realize that the Party will not follow in Preobrazhensky's footsteps.

What, indeed, does Preobrazhensky propose? He proposes nothing more nor less than a reversion to Party life "on the lines of 1917-18." What distinguished the years 1917-18 in this respect? The fact that, at that time, we had groups and factions in our Party, that there was an open fight between the groups at that time, that the Party was then passing through a critical period, during which its fate hung in the balance. Preobrazhensky is demanding that this state of affairs in the Party, a state of affairs that was abolished by the Tenth Congress, should be restored, at least "partly." Can the Party take this path? No, it cannot. Firstly, because the restoration of Party life on the lines that existed in 1917-18, when there was no N.E.P., does not, and cannot, meet the Party's needs under the conditions prevailing in 1923, when there is the N.E.P. Secondly, because the restoration of the former situation of factional struggle would inevitably result in the disruption of Party unity, especially now that Comrade Lenin is absent.

Preobrazhensky is inclined to depict the conditions of internal Party life in 1917-18 as something desirable and ideal. But we know of a great many dark sides of this period of internal Party life, which caused the Party very severe shocks. I do not think that the internal Party struggle among the Bolsheviks ever reached such intensity as it did in that period, the period of the Brest Peace. It is well known, for example, that the "Left" Communists, who at that time constituted a separate faction, went to the length of talking seriously about replacing the existing Council of People's Commissars by another Council of People's Commissars consisting of new people belonging to the "Left" Communist faction. Some of the members of the present opposition—Preobrazhensky, Pyatakov, Stukov and others—then belonged to the "Left" Communist faction.

Is Preobrazhensky thinking of "restoring" those old "ideal" conditions in our Party?

It is obvious, at all events, that the Party will not agree to this "restoration."

## Sapronov's Article

Sapronov thinks that the chief cause of the defects in internal Party life is the presence in the Party's apparatuses of "Party pedants," "schoolmistresses," who are busy "teaching the Party members" according to "the school method," and are thus hindering the real training of the Party members in the course of the struggle. Although dubbing the responsible workers in our Party apparatus "schoolmistresses," Sapronov does not think of asking where these people came from, and how it came to pass that "Party pedants" gained control of the work of our Party. Advancing this more than reckless and demagogic proposition as proved, Sapronov forgot that a Marxist cannot be satisfied with mere assertions, but must first of all understand a phenomenon, if it really exists at all, and explain it, in order then to propose effective measures for improvement. But evidently Sapronov does not care a rap about Marxism. He wants at all costs to malign the Party apparatus—and all the rest will follow. And so, in Sapronov's opinion, the evil will of "Party pedants" is the cause of the defects in our internal Party life. An excellent explanation, it must be admitted.

Only we do not understand:

1) How could these "schoolmistresses" and "Party pedants" retain the leadership of the most revolutionary proletariat in the world?

2) How could our "Party schoolchildren" who are being taught by these "schoolmistresses" retain the leadership of the most revolutionary country in the world?

At all events it is clear that it is easier to talk about "Party pedants" than to understand and appreciate the very great merit of our Party apparatus.

How does Sapronov propose to remedy the defects in our internal Party life? His remedy is as simple as his diagnosis. "Change our officers," remove the present responsible workers from their posts—such is Sapronov's remedy. This he regards as the principal guarantee that internal Party democracy will be practiced. From the point of view of democracy, I am far from denying the importance of new elections as a means of improving our internal Party life; but to regard that as the principal guarantee means to understand neither internal Party life nor its defects. In the ranks of the opposition there are men like Byeloborodov, whose "democracy" is still remembered by the workers in Rostov; Rosenholtz, whose "democracy" was a misery to our water-transport workers and railwaymen; Pyatakov, whose "democracy" made the whole of the Donets Basin not only cry out, but positively howl; Alsky, with the nature of whose "democracy" everybody is familiar; Byk, from whose "democracy" Khorezm is still groaning. Does Sapronov think that if the places of the "Party pedants" are taken by the "esteemed comrades" enumerated above, democracy will triumph in the Party? Permit me to have some doubts about that.

Evidently, there are two kinds of democracy; the democracy of the mass of Party members, who are eager to display initiative and to take an active part in the work of Party leadership, and the "democracy" of disgruntled Party bigwigs who think that dismissing some and putting others in their place is the essence of democracy. The Party will stand for the first kind of democracy and will carry it out with an iron hand. But the Party will throw out the "democracy" of the disgruntled Party bigwigs, which has nothing in common with genuine internal Party democracy, workers' democracy.

To ensure internal Party democracy it is necessary, secondly, to do away with the pressure exerted by our bureaucratic state apparatus, which has about a million employees, upon our Party apparatus, which has no more than 20,000-30,000 workers. But it is impossible to do away with the pressure of this cumbersome machine and gain mastery over it in a short space of time.

To ensure internal Party democracy it is necessary, thirdly, to raise the cultural level of our backward units, of which there are quite a number, and to distribute our active workers correctly over the entire territory of the Union; but that, too, cannot be achieved in a short space of time.

As you see, to ensure complete democracy is not so simple a matter as Sapronov thinks, that is, of course, if by democracy we mean not Sapronov's empty, formal democracy, but real, workers', genuine democracy.

Obviously, the entire Party from top to bottom must exert its will to ensure and put into effect genuine internal Party democracy.

### Trotsky's Letter

The resolution of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission on internal Party democracy, published on December 7, was adopted unanimously [passed on 5 December, see above, R.W.]. Trotsky voted for this resolution. It might have been expected, therefore, that the members of the Central Committee, including Trotsky, would come forward in a united front with a call to Party members for unanimous support of the Central Committee and its resolution. This expectation, however, has not been realized. The other day Trotsky issued a letter to the Party conferences which cannot be interpreted otherwise than as an attempt to weaken the will of the Party membership for unity in supporting the Central Committee and its position.

Judge for yourselves.

After referring to bureaucracy in the Party apparatus and the danger of degeneration of the old guard, i.e., the Leninists, the main core of our Party, Trotsky writes:

"The degeneration of the 'old guard' has been observed in history more than once. Let us take the latest and most glaring historical example: the leaders and the parties of the Second International. We know that Wilhelm Liebknecht, Bebel, Singer, Victor Adler, Kautsky, Bernstein, Lafargue, Guesde, and others, were the immediate and direct pupils of Marx and Engels. We know, however, that all those leaders—some partly, and others wholly—degenerated into opportunism...." "We, that is, we 'old ones,' must say that our generation, which naturally plays a leading role in the Party, has no self-sufficient guarantee against the gradual and imperceptible weakening of the proletarian and revolutionary spirit, assuming that the Party tolerates a further growth and consolidation of the bureaucratic-apparatus methods of policy which are transforming the younger generation into passive educational material and are inevitably creating estrangement between the apparatus and the membership, between the old and the young...." "The youth—the Party's truest barometer—react most sharply of all against Party bureaucracy...." "The youth must capture the revolutionary formulas by storm...."

First, I must dispel a possible misunderstanding. As is evident from his letter, Trotsky includes himself among the Bolshevik old guard, thereby showing readiness to take upon himself the charges that may be hurled at the old guard if it does indeed take the path of degeneration. It must be admitted that this readiness for self-sacrifice is undoubtedly a noble trait. But I must protect Trotsky from Trotsky, because, for obvious reasons, he cannot, and should not, bear responsibility for the possible degeneration of the principal cadres of the Bolshevik old guard. Sacrifice is a good thing of course, but do the old Bolsheviks need it? I think that they do not.

Secondly, it is impossible to understand how opportunists and Mensheviks like Bernstein, Adler, Kautsky, Guesde, and the others, can be put on a par with the Bolshevik old guard, which has always fought, and I hope will continue to fight with honor, against opportunism, the Mensheviks and the Second International. What is the cause of this muddle and confusion? Who needs it, bearing in mind the interests of the Party and not ulterior motives that by no means aim at defence of the old guard? How is one to interpret these insinuations about opportunism in relations to the old Bolsheviks, who matured in the struggle against opportunism?

Thirdly, I do not by any means think that the old Bolsheviks are absolutely guaranteed against the danger of degeneration any more than I have grounds for asserting that we are absolutely guaranteed against, say, an earthquake. As a *possibility*, such a danger can and should be assumed. But does this mean that such a danger is *real*, that it exists? I think that

it does not. Trotsky himself has adduced no evidence to show that the danger of degeneration is a real danger. Nevertheless, there are a number of elements within our Party who are capable of giving rise to a real danger of degeneration of certain ranks of our Party. I have in mind that section of the Mensheviks who joined our Party *unwillingly*, and who have not yet got rid of their old opportunist habits. The following is what Comrade Lenin wrote about these Mensheviks, and about this danger, at the time of the Party purge:

“Every opportunist is distinguished for his adaptability... and the Mensheviks, as opportunists, adapt themselves ‘on principle,’ so to speak, to the prevailing trend among the workers and assume a protective coloring, just as a hare’s coat turns white in the winter. It is necessary to know this specific feature of the Mensheviks and take it into account. And taking it into account means purging the Party of approximately ninety-nine out of every hundred of the Mensheviks who joined the Russian Communist Party after 1918, i.e., when the victory of the Bolsheviks first became probable and then certain.”

How could it happen that Trotsky, who lost sight of this and similar, really existing dangers, pushed into the foreground a possible danger, the danger of the degeneration of the Bolshevik old guard? How can one shut one’s eyes to a real danger and push into the foreground an unreal, possible danger, if one has the interests of the Party in view and not the object of undermining the prestige of the majority in the Central Committee, the leading core of the Bolshevik old guard? Is it not obvious that “approaches” of this kind can only bring grist to the mill of the opposition?

Fourthly, what reasons did Trotsky have for *contrasting* the “old ones,” who may degenerate, to the “youth,” the Party’s “truest barometer”; for *contrasting* the “old guard,” who may become bureaucratic, to the “young guard,” which must “capture the revolutionary formulas by storm”? What grounds had he for drawing this contrast, and what did he need it for? Have not the youth and the old guard always marched in a united front against internal and external enemies? Is not the unity between the “old ones” and the “young ones” the basic strength of our revolution? What was the object of this attempt to discredit the old guard and demagogically to flatter the youth if not to cause and widen a fissure between these principal detachments of our Party? Who needs all this, if one has the interests of the Party in view, its unity and solidarity, and not an attempt to shake this unity for the benefit of the opposition?

Is that the way to defend the Central Committee and its resolution on internal Party democracy, which, moreover, was adopted unanimously?

But evidently, that was not Trotsky’s object in issuing his letter to the Party conferences. Evidently there was a different intention here, namely: diplomatically to support the opposition in its struggle against the Central Committee of the Party while pretending to support the Central Committee’s resolution.

That, in fact, explains the stamp of duplicity that Trotsky’s letter bears.

Trotsky is in a bloc with the Democratic Centralists and with a section of the “Left” Communists—therein lies the political significance of Trotsky’s action.

Stalin, *Works*, V: 380-397.



#### THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF ECONOMIC POLICY.

24 December 1923

*By 1923 the New Economic Policy had weathered the economic catastrophe of 1921 and improved production. Now a complex economic debate began. Involved were such issues*

*as greater reliance on planning, financial and currency policies, foreign trade, the role of industrial managers vis-a-vis party officials and others. A resolution on economic policies had been passed at the Twelfth Party Congress in April, but because economic issues played such an important role in the debates of the fall (see above), it was necessary to restate the economic policies of the party leadership in the face of the criticisms. A "chervonets" was a new unit of currency introduced in 1922 as part of the effort to stabilize the currency situation, and existed for a period alongside the ruble. "Valuta" (valiuta) meant currency and is so used in this essay; it should not be confused with its later common use in the Soviet Union to mean foreign or "hard" currency.*

## IMMEDIATE TASKS OF ECONOMIC POLICY

[Resolution of the Central Committee]

The Party, when solving the immediate questions of economic policy, must take as a basis the fundamental task for the given historical period, i.e. the realization of the alliance between proletariat and peasantry, the linking up of town and country, and of the nationalized industry and the peasant economy.

Only the correct solution of the questions which arise in regard to the relations between the working class and the peasants can permanently strengthen the economic basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat and preserve it from any kind of wavering.

The 12th Congress of the Party, in its resolution on the organization of industry, has laid particular stress upon the fact that the pace of development of our state industry meets with certain objective hindrances, which are determined by the state of the peasant economy, and that the exact adaptation of the entire economic policy to the level of development of the peasant economy forms the most important task, an incorrect solution of which would unavoidably bring disastrous consequences, not only in the economic, but also in the political sphere. Only a radical change in the present political and economic structure of the industrial countries of Europe could perceptibly lessen the immediate dependence of the state industry upon the situation of the peasant economy and create the conditions necessary for a quicker transition to a regime of socialist economy.

A resolution of the 12th Congress States:

"Agriculture, although with us it is still on a low technical level, has a preponderating importance for the whole economics of the Soviet power ... Our Party must not for a moment forget, nor fail to lose sight of the preponderating importance of the peasants' economy, when mediating any action ... Not only the neglect, but also the lack of sufficient attention to this circumstance would be fraught with innumerable dangers, both in the economic and the purely political sphere. It would inevitably undermine and weaken that alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, that confidence of the peasantry in the proletariat which, in the given historical transition period, forms the principal supports of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the maintenance and strengthening of which alliance and confidence form the fundamental condition for the stability of the Soviet Power and, as a consequence, the fundamental task of the Party."

These systematic instructions of the Party have, up to the present, not been thoroughly carried out in the practice of our economic organs. It was far from being properly understood that the necessity for setting up the most thorough interchange between town and village formed the principal motive for the transition to the New Economic Policy, and that under the N.E.P. the supplying of the peasantry with the products of the state industry forms the principal economic task.

The present economic difficulties (lack of market) are to a considerable extent to be attributed to the insufficient heed given by the Party to these indications regarding the role and the significance of the peasants' economy and the peculiarities resulting from the task of realizing the dictatorship of the proletariat in a country with a predominating peasant population. The task of the Party in the future must consist of systematically and carefully

carrying out the above policy in regard to the relations between town and village, and not allowing itself to be diverted in an economically and politically injurious manner in the direction of an under-estimation of the significance of the peasant economy in the general economic structure of the country.

Resulting from the lack of coordination between the tempo of the reconstruction of the peasants' economy on the one hand, and the exchange of manufactured goods on the other, there arose the phenomena of the present crisis. This crisis is characterized by the disparity between the extraordinarily high prices for industrial products and the low prices for agricultural products. The industry, which had grown up on the basis of the town market, which is able to pay higher prices, could not at the moment of the realization of the harvest sell its goods to the mass consumer with a lower purchasing power—the peasantry. On the other hand the peasantry did not find a sufficiently wide home and foreign market for a profitable sale of its grain, as a result of which there followed the low prices of the latter.

To the sharpening of the market crisis there contributed: the insufficient development of the commercial relations, the policy of high prices adopted by the syndicates, the weak development of money economy, the existence of two kinds of valuta, from which the peasantry suffered most owing to the depreciation of the Soviet paper rubles.

As a result of the steady work, the last year has yielded undoubted successes in the sphere of the reconstruction of industry and transport, and shows a greater quantity of goods manufactured by the state industry than ever before during the Soviet rule. On the other hand, the peasantry undoubtedly has enlarged its area of land under cultivation, has to a certain extent raised the level of its economy, has increased the production of special cultures, and, thanks to the substitution of the greater part of tax in kind by money taxes, it had at its disposal a greater surplus of grain, although the harvest was poorer than that of the last year.

The present crisis therefore can by no means be compared with those crises resulting from lack of goods and from lack of grain, which confronted the country in the years 1919/20/21. The fundamental elements of the national economy as a whole (the quantity of coal, naphtha, metals, cotton produced and of the grain remaining in the hands of the peasantry etc.), have undoubtedly increased. The crisis arose as a result of the disparity between these particular branches of the national economy, and in the first place, as a result of our state industry and trade being incapable of finding their way to the peasant mass market.

### I. Agriculture

The smallness of the rural market and the small purchasing power possessed by the peasantry, as well as the high cost of production of urban industry, are the result of the long period of the imperialist and civil wars. The sinking of the prices for agricultural products is a world phenomenon which, in the capitalist countries, for instance in America, has led to the sheer destruction (burning) of huge quantities of grain in order to bring about an artificial increase of prices.

The urban and industrial population of the Soviet Union does not constitute a sufficient market for the peasant economy. There can be an increase in the prices of the grain produced by the peasants, first and primarily, by capturing the foreign markets. Already in the year 1922, this circumstance was taken into account by the Party, which laid down the necessity of developing by every means the export of agricultural products. In that year there was exported 40 million poods of grain, while in 1923 it was decided, as the most important task of the economic policy, to increase the export of grain to 250 million poods.

In order to ensure the success of the peasant grain producers in their struggle for the foreign markets, it is necessary to adapt agriculture to the conditions of these markets. The Party has called attention to the necessity of helping the peasantry to raise the technical level of their economy, to introduce more intensive cultivation, to increase the amount of their floating capital, and to renew their livestock, implements etc.



In the first place there must be an improvement in the organization of the state purchases and export of grain, a reduction of the expenses connected therewith, and the greatest possible reduction of the role and of the income of any kind of middlemen or dealers in the grain trade.

The Soviet Power must and can also aid the peasantry by increasing their floating capital by means of: a) organization of cheap agricultural credits (organization of an agricultural bank); b) the placing at the disposal of the peasantry, under very favorable terms of credit, of tools and agricultural machinery; c) support of the village co-operatives and the like. In all its measures regarding the peasantry the Party must have regard to the necessity of helping by every means the poorest and middle strata of the peasantry, in particular the co-operative farming bodies, in order to save them from being pushed out by the richer peasants.

The peasants' economy is the fundamental basis for the reconstruction of industry, and, as a consequence, for the growth of the working class, as the peasants' market is the principal market for industrial products. The peasants' economy, on the other hand, is the principal supplier of raw materials for our industry. For this reason, the greatest possible support must be granted to the peasants' economy, not only in the general interests of the Soviet power, but in the special interests of the most rapid development of industry itself.

## II. State Industry

Only the development of the nationalized heavy industry can create an unshakable foundation for the proletarian dictatorship. In view of this fact, the 12th Party Congress gave precise instructions as to the measures which must be adopted and systematically carried out by the Party, in order to strengthen and to develop our state industry.

The state industry has, in the last twelve months, shown a considerable development, it has increased its output and improved the quality of its goods, whereby the production has steadily increased from month to month without any sudden spurt or decline.

The tempo of the development of the state heavy industry in the past year has somewhat exceeded that of agriculture and of small and home industry. (If one takes the whole production of heavy industry one sees that, compared with the year 1921, it has nearly doubled. The total quantity of the state industry has risen to 35 per cent of the pre-war quantity.)

In particular the successes obtained in the sphere of the fuel economy furnish the possibility for a further reconstruction of the remaining branches of industry. Transport is in a condition so as to meet, without special difficulties, all the demands of the national economy. Along with this there must be recorded a series of successes obtained in the organization of production in the factories and works and in the organization of industry as a whole.

The present crisis has, however, revealed also in this sphere a number of unhealthy symptoms, the eradication of which forms one of the most urgent tasks of the Party.

In their eagerness to make good the losses sustained by industry in the first year of the N.E.P., several economic organs have incorrectly carried out the instruction of the 12th Congress regarding the necessity of striving to place industry on a profitable basis and have increased the prices to a level which could only be paid by those having the greatest purchasing power. The high prices of the goods collided with the low purchasing power of the mass peasant market. The goods remained unsold, and not only failed to yield the expected profits to the industry, but as a result its undertakings were threatened with insolvency and closing down production.

The syndicates, which were set up in the struggle for the domination of the market and for the fixing of uniform prices, were the immediate promoters of this policy of high prices. This policy was the undoubted result of the improper use of the monopoly of several branches of industry with an insufficient development of regulating organs.

The socialist accumulation is a fundamental and decisive factor for the fate of the proletarian dictatorship under the N.E.P. It is, however, a mistake from the point of view of socialist construction, if in the prices of the goods there are included, besides the cost of production and the necessary minimum of profit, the expenses for such a rapid reconstruction and augmentation of the foundation capital, as are obviously, at the present time, beyond the power of the great mass of the population of the country. It will be much more necessary in the future to co-ordinate the policy as to prices with the most important peasant markets and to co-ordinate the tempo of the development of industry more strictly than heretofore with the general growth in the capacity of the peasant market.

During the year 1923, of the total quantity of the production of the state industry, seven tenths were sold to consumers in the towns, while only three tenths went to meet the needs of peasant consumers. This proves that our industry is far from being capable of reaching the peasant mass consumers.

The level of prices attained by industrial products in the last year is to be attributed not only to objective causes, but also, to a considerable extent, to defective organization and to the lack of economizing with regard to additional expenses, which is absolutely necessary to the reconstruction of the economy of the Soviet Republics. In order to arrive at a reduction of prices, the attention of industry must be directed to reducing the cost of production, by means of improving and augmenting the production and the greatest possible reduction of the additional expenses, and also to the improvement and cheapening of its trade apparatus.

In connection with this it is necessary to revise the existing syndicates and only allow those to remain, the existence of which is proved to be economically justified. Only by a strict carrying out of the policy of adaptation to the mass market, of the reduction of the cost of production and of the augmentation of production of articles for mass consumption, will the state industry be in a position to compete successfully with private capital in regard to meeting the demands of the mass consumer—the peasant and the worker.

While in every way adapting the state nationalized industry to meet the demands of the mass consumer, the Party will, at the same time, continue to recognize the necessity of helping to a certain extent the small industry, which does not need any great expense for its reconstruction nor require any special stocks of raw materials, fuel and food, and can render a certain amount of help to the peasant economy and can raise the level of its productive forces, thereby increasing the amount of the total turnover of goods for the whole country.

An indispensable element for the improvement of the organization of our industry is its concentration. We have received as a heritage from the old economic regime, a great number of undertakings which had been set up without regard to any general economic plan and to that structure of economic life which we have today. These undertakings lie as a dead weight on the state budget. The expenses of their maintenance, while they are only partially or even fully occupied, unavoidably enter into the price of the products and thereby help to sell them. But the Party must not for a moment forget that here, more than in any other sphere, commercial and fiscal considerations must be subservient to political considerations, i.e., as to the preservation of the political power of the working class. In those cases where the closing of any undertakings would strike a blow at the political forces of the proletariat and scatter its best elements, the drastic implementation of the policy of concentration would be an unpardonable political error.

In the preceding period the Party devoted its efforts to strengthening and increasing the production of coal (Don Basin) and of naphtha (Baku), because if industry were not provided with fuel, there could be no talk of strengthening the other branches of industry. The successes now obtained with regard to the production of fuel render it possible and necessary to concentrate the attention of the Party on the metallurgical industry. The metallurgical industry must, in the next period, be given the first place and receive from the state a far greater measure of comprehensive help, in particular financial, than in the last year.

### III. Wages and Trade Unions

The economic difficulties which arose in the Autumn, were accompanied by wage fluctuations and have also given rise to a number of defects in regard to regularity of payment, as well as to the method of payment. In the beginning of August, the Political Bureau, and in September the Plenum of the C.C. adopted several resolutions which aimed at preserving the wages from depreciation and increasing them among those groups of the proletariat which were backward in this respect (for instance railway workers).

The Party is of the opinion that the situation of industry and of the state economy is such as to permit the abolition of the payment of wages in such a form as involves in practice their reduction (inferior food substitutes, payment in notes of a large denomination, etc.), and also warrants the adoption of a series of decisive measures directed against the irregular payment of wages. The Party demands that all the economic organs should in the future combat these defects, and insists upon the regular payment of wages being the first duty of the economic organs.

The improvement of industry and of transport, which is due to the heroic efforts of the forces of the working class, must find its expression in an improvement of the situation of the workers. The trade union organs must direct their permanent attention to securing that these two lines—that of economic improvement and that of the improvement of the welfare of the working class—shall show a certain measure of congruity.

The process of the reconstruction of our industry is unavoidably accompanied by an increase in the number of the proletariat, by its consolidation, by the raising of its material and cultural level. There results from this the particularly urgent task of the trade unions of devoting themselves far more than hitherto to the organization and leadership of industry.

Special care must be given by the trade unions to the selection of the organizers promoted from among the working classes who are capable of occupying positions as leaders of the state industry. The Party, the trade unions and the economic organs must for this purpose take upon themselves the task of preparing groups of such leaders from among the ranks of the workers by means of special schools and also by means of drawing wide masses into the discussions on the economic situation and on the current work of the industrial undertakings. Conferences of the different branches of industry are to be regularly held, at which representatives of the economic organs, trade unions, of the Party and of the non-party workers are to come together, in order to discuss the current questions concerning the productive life in order to arrive at conclusions based on the data furnished by the reports, and to provide possibilities to exchange experience. These conferences must enable the trade unions to study carefully and to control the management of the undertakings and to help by every means the economic organs in the improvement of the economy, in the fight against bad management and all avoidable additional expenditure etc.

### IV. Foreign Trade

The monopoly of foreign trade forms one of the fundamental elements of the entire economic policy of the Party. The monopoly of foreign trade has fully justified itself, in particular under the conditions of the N.E.P., as a weapon of defence against the country being stripped of its wealth by foreign and native capitalists, as well as a means of socialist accumulation.

It was only by preserving in its entirety the system of the monopoly of foreign trade, that we were able to attain to an active trade balance and to concentrate the income resulting from foreign trade into the hands of the state.

It is by hindering with all means the loss to the country resulting from the payment of imported goods which could be produced in the country itself, that the monopoly of foreign trade makes it possible to organize a planned import of those goods which are indispensable for the development of our industry and the peasant economy. The monopoly of

the foreign trade must also in the future be preserved in its entirety as the most important element of the economic policy of the Party, especially in the period of the NEP.

### **V. Domestic Trade and Co-operatives**

Under the New Economic Policy, the organization of the commerce has a unique importance because, by means of the commercial apparatus, there must be the closest linkage between nationalized industry and the peasant market. Every strengthening of the co-operative and state commerce and every enlargement of the field of their activity imply an enlargement of the sphere of the socialist economy. Every weakening of the positions of the co-operatives and state commerce, and every strengthening of the positions of the private middle-man, dealer and merchant imply an enlargement of the sphere of domination of the bourgeois capitalistic conditions. The support, therefore, of the co-operatives and the development of the state commerce, the winning by them of positions from the private commercial capitalists on the basis of competition, the economic employment of capital gained by them, form the most important tasks of the economic policy of the Party.

In the meantime the crisis has shown that the co-operatives and state commerce are not up to those tasks which confront them: the tasks of establishing an immediate connection between state industry and the mass consumers.

The insufficient flexibility and specialization of the organs, the unwieldiness of the bureaucratism of the commercial apparatus, the high rate of the additional expenses, the incapability of reaching the mass market, the insufficient adaptability to the needs of the scattered millions of the peasantry—all these demand from the Party steadfast work to eliminate these defects resulting from the crisis. The problems of commerce confront the Party in all their immensity.

### **VI. Private Capital**

The problem of the relationship between state and private capital forms, at the present time, the most important problem in the sphere of economics. It is decisive for the relationship between the class forces of the proletariat, based on the nationalized industry, and the new bourgeoisie based on the elementary play of free competition. By establishing the bases for the New Economic Policy, which has fully justified itself and requires no revision leading practically to a return of War Communism, the Party has not only permitted private capital to accumulate a certain amount of capital resources derived from commerce, but it has also handed over for partial exploitation by private capital a part of the means of production at its disposal (concessions, leases, etc.). In this latter sphere the participation of private capital is both absolutely and relatively negligible. The comparatively more important role of private capital in commerce is due to its greater adaptability to the retail trade and to the supplying of the needs of the scattered customers in the village.

State capital cannot take upon itself the rapid establishment of immediate connections with the whole 100 million mass of scattered productive peasantry, but also in this sphere the growth of private capital must be kept within certain limits by means of strengthening the economic role of the co-operatives and of state commerce and by means of an adoption to the needs and conditions of trade in the village.

One of the principal pre-conditions for the strengthening of our positions against private capital must be the fixing of reasonable prices. Soviet rule, having concentrated in its hands the principal mass of products which are needed by the village, must become capable of ensuring that the state organizations and co-operatives sell more cheaply than the private dealer. We must render the mass consumer—worker and peasant—aware of the superiority of the co-operative and state trade over those organizations based on private capital. The co-operative organizations are destined to play the chief role in trade organization, especially in that of the retail trade. A number of measures must therefore be adopted which

will render the co-operatives an effective weapon for elimination of private trade capital (state subsidies to co-operatives, in particular to the workers' co-operatives; transference of the co-operatives to the principle of voluntary membership; the greatest attention must be devoted to enlarging the network of co-operative organizations and to strengthening the lowest co-operative nuclei; the realization of their right to enter into immediate commercial relations with the state industry; drastic reduction of additional expenses; greatest possible reduction of intermediary channels, through which the goods are passed on to the consumer, and the like).

Along with this, in order to render subordinate the activity of private capital to the general economic policy of the Soviet power, a number of further measures must be adopted for regulating the prices of the principal articles of mass consumption. On the other hand the control over accumulation on the parts of private capital must be reached by measures of taxation. There must be a drastic taxation. There must be a drastic taxation of luxuries, and an intensification of the struggle against predatory speculators.

The Party has resolutely abandoned the policy of grain requisition and the system of rationing the food supply to the working population. By allowing the peasants freely to dispose of the results of their labor, the Party has thereby permitted to a certain degree the participation of private capital in the exchange of goods and has no reason for abandoning this policy. But the Party must systematically work for strengthening its position in this sphere also, by a tenacious and unwearied struggle for the complete domination of the peasant mass market.

## VII. Financial Policy

An extraordinarily important gain for the realization of the principal tasks of our economic policy was obtained in the last year by the introducing a stable valuta [currency-RW]—the chervonets—and by making it the fundamental valuta of the country (out of 350 million representing the total amount of money in circulation in the country, the chervonets already comprises 270 million, i. e. about four-fifths).

The introduction of the chervonets and its maintenance as a stable valuta were only possible as a result of the progressive increase of our entire economy and prove the correctness of our policy of economic reconstruction.

The circulation of the chervonets forms, at the present time, one of the most essential aids for the development of our economy. The growth of the state industry mentioned above during the last year would not have been possible without the chervonets. On the basis of the circulation of the chervonets, credits have been and are being granted to trade, industry and agriculture. The granting of bank credits to industry and trade has reached a considerable degree of development. These credits have formed a fund for conducting operations, without which the systematic development of industry and of the entire national economy would be impossible. Basing itself on these credits, industry has for the first time been able to develop its production without any setbacks, and was also able to accumulate considerable stocks of goods in anticipation of the harvest.

The strict accounting, the correct calculation of the cost of production and the introduction of a proper system of book-keeping in our factories and works, trusts, syndicates and trade organizations have only become possible thanks to the stability of the chervonets. Their continued improvement in the future will only be possible by its help.

The further policy of our Party must consist of preserving the stability of the chervonets, and of perfecting the currency reform. The interests of the broad masses demand the perfecting of the currency reform, i.e. the substitution of a stable valuta for the sinking Soviet notes. The perfecting of the currency reform must become one of the principal tasks of the Soviet power in the next period.

The successful accomplishment of this task implies an improvement in the position of the peasant economy, a raising of the material position of the working class, and of the working strata of the population in general, and the recovery of our economy as a whole.

The successful carrying out of the currency reform is only possible by reducing as much as possible the budget deficit and by strict economy on the part of all economic organs. The struggle against wasteful expenditure of any kind therefore constitutes an essential economic requirement.

As regards the state budget, considerable gains have to be recorded. The normal resources of revenue have increased. The money press is playing an increasingly less important role as a means of covering expenditure. In the future, every effort must be directed towards increasing the pecuniary resources of the state without increasing the burden of taxation on the working strata of the population, and by increasing the yield of profit derived from the state lands and undertakings.

At the same time there is an undoubted improvement in the preparation of the budget estimates themselves. For some years past the Soviet power has been striving for the creation of a real budget. But it was only in the last year that any considerable improvements were attained in this direction. We have, for the first time, budget estimates which correspond to the true state of affairs and which to a greater extent than before permit one to foresee and to calculate regarding the state administration and economy.

The introduction of the chervonets has, of itself, considerably facilitated the possibility of proper accounting, and consequently also of a systematic control over economy as a whole, as well as over single undertakings. The improvement and perfection of the budget plans have constituted the next step. But it is only by improving and perfecting the currency reform, that it will be possible, on the basis of a stable currency unit, to formulate effective financial plans for industry and trade, to conduct a correct calculation and to organize a reliable system of recording and accounting.

The currency reform must therefore form one of the essential pre-requisites for the necessary expansion of co-ordination between the various parts of the national economy, and it will for the first time provide a real basis for the effective systematic control of economy.

### **VIII. On the Necessity of Increasing the Basis of Planned Economy**

It would be a fundamental mistake to assume that, with the preponderance of the small peasant economy, with the increasing importance of the world market and of its prices in our economy, the state planned management would be able to exclude the possibility of crises under the N.E.P.

The present crisis emphasizes, however, the necessity of increasing the efforts towards coordinating the single branches of the national economy, and extending the basis of planned economy in the work of the state economic organs.

In a far greater measure than heretofore, the Party must learn to co-ordinate the elements of the state economy in their mutual relation and their relations with the market. This task is facilitated by the fact that we have now gained considerable successes in regard to the creating of fundamental premises for the management of planned economy, without which it could easily transform itself into a bureaucratic utopia. These premises for a successful planned economy consist of: 1.) the creation of a stable valuta, 2.) the organization of credits, 3.) the accumulation of material resources with which to operate, 4.) the realization and strengthening of certain forms of organization of economy (trusts and the like), 5.) the existence of a number of individual plans, constructed on the basis of experience, especially well-founded budget plans, and the like.

The existence of these conditions furnishes the possibility of far more successful work than before of the state organs of planned economy. The next tasks are the strengthening of the "Gosplan", the increasing of its role in relation to financial and credit policy, the creating of closer connections between its work and the work of the People's Commissariat for Finances, the Supreme Council for People's Economy, the People's Commissariat for Agriculture, the Commission for Interior Trade and the like, the strengthening of its local organs and the like.

The next task of the "Gosplan" must be the systematic study of the current market conjuncture, and the elaboration of fundamental measures aiming at influencing the trend of the market. The "Gosplan" must be actually guaranteed that position which was indicated in the resolution of the 12th Party Congress. The appointment of one of the vice-presidents of the Council of People's Commissars as president of the "Gosplan" assures the immediate participation of the "Gosplan" in the solution of all current questions of the economic life.

## IX. Practical Conclusions

### A. In the Sphere of Agriculture.

1. Intensification of agriculture, development of the cultivation of raw materials, cattle-breeding etc. by means of several stimulative measures (alleviation of taxes, credits and the like);

2. development of grain exports by every means in order to procure access to the world market for surplus grain produced by the peasants, and thereby to gain better grain prices for peasants' economy; for the same purpose there must be the greatest possible reduction in the additional expenses for the purchase and transport of grain;

3. to adopt all measures for organizing the state grain trade in the home market in such forms as will guarantee the stability of grain prices (arrangements for the transport of appropriate quantities of grain, regulation of freight charges, development of the distribution of elevators etc.);

4. development of a complete system in the villages of consumers and agricultural products and for providing the peasantry with the necessary articles of consumption;

5. the adoption of urgent measures for the development of agricultural credits by a central agricultural bank, and by local credit associations, in order to supply the peasants, the peasants' associations and the collective farms with agricultural machines and tools at reasonable prices on the principle of long term credit;

6. beginning with the year 1924, transition to the levying of a uniform agricultural tax, calculated in stable valuta;

7. in the year 1924 large-scale alleviations of the agricultural tax must be instituted for peasant farms with weak resources; the organizations of agricultural laborers (All-Russian Confederation of Agricultural and Forest Laborers) and of the poorest strata of the peasantry (the Committees of Poor Peasants and the like) must be helped by every means;

8. The imposition of non-official supplementary levies in the village on the part of local authorities must be ended; voluntary levies are only to take place with the sanction of the central organs in each individual case.

### B. In the Sphere of Industry.

1. Rationalization of production and increase of productivity of labor;

2. increasing the tasks prescribed for the various undertakings and systematic distribution of orders, especially in the heavy industry;

3. reduction of the additional expenses by simplifying the organization of industry, reduction of the number of employees, etc.;

4. reducing the cost of raw material, fuel and auxiliary materials of industry by reducing expenditures for their purchase, as well as importing cheap foreign raw materials;

5. creation of a well ordered industrial calculation with the imposition of strict responsibility for its accuracy;

6. exact determination of the rights and duties of the managers of trusts and of the directors of undertakings, in order fully to liquidate the remnants of bureaucratic centralism;

7. systematic promotion of practical workers in industry to responsible positions in industrial undertakings and associations;

8. every assistance to be extended to those holding responsible positions in the economic field, in their difficult work for industrial construction under the conditions of a bitter struggle against private capital;

9. increasing the participation of trade unions in the management of economic organs, in the control of their activity and in the selection of economic functionaries;

10. to bring the Party organizations in the undertakings nearer to production, by means of regular information supplied to the Party nuclei regarding the progress of the work in the undertakings and associations, by free discussions regarding all sides of the activity of the economic organs and by stimulating the initiative of the comrades to seek means for improving economic work.

#### C. In the Sphere of Wages.

1. To aim at an increase of wages in accordance with the progress of the industry and of the productivity of labor;

2. to impose severe penalties for withholding the payment of wages. Along with this there must be recognized the necessity of fully compensating the worker for loss derived from fluctuation in the value of the Soviet note in all cases of the withholding of payment of wages;

3. to forbid the payment of bonuses on turnovers, and only permitting the payment of bonuses on the net profit and then only to particularly conscientious and meritorious functionaries with the consent of the trade unions;

4. to improve the housing conditions of the workers, acknowledging as an urgent task the insuring of state credits for the Soviet housing schemes;

5. special attention must be given to the payment of insurance contributions in order, in the first place, to insure that portion of the unemployed who constitute genuine proletarian elements and who are, before all, to be absorbed into production as soon as the latter is extended.

#### D. In the Sphere of Foreign Trade.

1. To adopt further measures for consolidating the foreign trade monopoly;

2. to attract foreign capital for the purposes of foreign trade, by promoting mixed companies for conducting export and import;

3. to implement a scheme of imports and exports connected with the fundamental economic plans and insuring a favorable trade balance (preponderance of exports over imports) and supplying Soviet industry with raw materials, with materials and semi-manufactured goods;

4. the greatest possible development of foreign credits for export trade.

#### E. In the Sphere of Domestic Trade

1. Extending the subordinate trade apparatus, in particular the network of subordinate co-operatives, on the basis of a careful service in the interests of the consumer (by introducing stocks of assorted goods indispensable to the mass consumers etc.), and regulation of relations with the private middleman in order to subordinate the latter economically to the co-operative and to state trade (by a regulation of retail prices etc.);

2. strengthening the regulation of wholesale prices, most of all on articles of mass consumption and especially those of peasant consumption, extending the same to retail prices by means of establishing maximum allowances for profit to the co-operatives on the part of the wholesale organs, by means of operating with certain stocks of goods on the part of the state in order to reduce the prices in certain areas, finally, by means of establishing a credit policy aimed first and foremost at serving the interests of subordinate trade organs;

3. the necessity of normalizing prices of salt, petroleum and sugar in all categories of trade (co-operative, state and private trade) must be recognized;



4. modification of the existing system of centralized purchases on the part of the superior organs in the direction of promoting immediate contracts between the subordinate trade organizations, the factory and work associations and the wholesale and retail stores, transforming accordingly the systems of the granting of credits to co-operatives and state trade;

5. the necessity must be recognized of a revision of the existing system of syndicates in order to abolish those which cannot be economically justified, limiting as a rule the commercial activity of the remaining syndicates within the confines of wholesale trade;

6. to revise the existing railway tariffs with a view to cheapening the transport of mass consignments of goods;

7. to adopt measures for reducing the additional trade expenses by reducing the number of trade representations, both in the capital and in the provinces, by giving contracts to co-operative and state trade organs, and finally by the reduction of wasteful expenditure (personal conveyances office equipment, advertising etc.);

8. selection of a special reserve staff of functionaries for strengthening the co-operative and state trade organs;

9. the establishment of an exact and punctual rendering of accounts on the part of trade organs.

#### F. In the Sphere of Finances.

1. Strictest observance of the stipulated annual budget, absolutely limiting the amount of the deficit within the confines provided by the budget;

2. transition to a stable valuta, abolition of unstable Soviet notes and issuing a stable currency of a low denomination in pieces under one chervonets and of small silver coinage not later than in the Spring, in connection with the reform of the agricultural tax;

3. reduction of indirect taxes on articles of mass consumption, especially on salt, petroleum and refined sugar;

4. cheapening of the credits for industry and trade purchases and decentralization of credits with a view to bringing them within the reach of the subordinate economic units;

5. to exploit by every means the regulating role of the credits coordinating the activity of the state bank and of other credit institutions with the leading organs of industry and trade through the "Gosplan" and the Council of Labor and Defence.

#### G. In the Sphere of the Work of Planned Economy.

1. Enlarging the role of the "Gosplan" in the elaboration of effective economic plans for the Council for Labor and Defence in connecting the elements of the national economy and to the regulation of market conditions on the basis of a systematic study of the economic conjunctures;

2. a close co-ordination between the work of the "Gosplan" and of the People's Commissariat for Finance, the Supreme Council for People's Economy, the Commission for Domestic Trade and other economic People's Commissariats, with an obligatory co-ordination of the general work scheme of the Central Statistical Institution with the work scheme of the "Gosplan".

*International Press Correspondence*, V, no. 7 (29 January 1924): 40-44.



## TROTSKY, THE NEW COURSE—II

28 and 29 December 1923

*Trotsky continued his criticism of the Party leadership with three long articles in Pravda under the general heading, "The New Course." Then, in January 1924, Trotsky published these three articles plus four new essays and some other material in a booklet entitled The New Course. This booklet is what usually is intended when historians talk about Trotsky's "New Course," although he had used the same term not only in these articles but also in his letter of December 8 (above) and used it to refer to the December 5 Politburo statement "On Building the Party" (see above), which Trotsky would later argue was an agreement for a "new course" of Party policy. Only the original three essays published in Pravda, the ones which were part of the initial debate and to which his critics first responded, are given here. They are given in the order in which they appeared in Pravda and, immediately afterward, for foreign consumption in International Press Correspondence. The sequence of chapters one and two was changed in the booklet publication. The explanatory note Trotsky provided in Pravda is given here as a prefatory note.*

Leon Trotsky

*The New Course*

I am endeavoring to give in a number of articles an estimation of those questions which now form the center of the Party discussion. I shall take pains that my words shall be of an informative character, taking into account the rank and file of the Party without which it is futile to speak of Party democracy. On the part of the reader, I expect a quiet and reflective attitude towards the subject. First of all, let us try to understand one another; there will be time enough afterwards to grow heated.

L.T.

## Chapter I

**The Social Composition of the Party**

The internal crisis of the party is obviously not confined to the relationships of the generations. Historically, in a broader sense, its solution is determined by the social composition of the party and, above all, by the specific weight of the factory cells, of the industrial proletarians, that it includes.

The first concern of the working class after the seizure of power was the creation of a state apparatus (including the army, the organs for the management of economy, *etc.*). But the participation of workers in the state, cooperative and other apparatuses implied a weakening of the factory cells and an excessive increase of functionaries in the party, proletarian in their origin or not. There is the contradiction of the situation. We can get out of it only by means of substantial economic progress, a strong impulsion to industrial life and a constant flow of manual workers into the party.

At what speed will this fundamental process take place, through what ebbs and flows will it pass? It is hard to predict that now. At the present stage of our economic development, everything must of course be done to draw into the party the greatest possible number of workers at the bench. But the membership of the party can be altered seriously (so that, for example, the factory cells make two-thirds of its ranks) only very slowly and only under conditions of noteworthy economic advances. In any case, we must still look forward to a very long period during which the most experienced and most active members of the party (including, naturally, those of proletarian origin) will be occupied at different posts of the state, the trade-union, the cooperative, and the party apparatuses. And this fact itself implies a danger, for it is one of the sources of bureaucratism.

The education of the youth necessarily occupies an exceptional place in the party, as it will continue to do. By building up in our workers' schools, universities, institutions of higher learning, the new contingent of intellectuals, which includes a high proportion of communists, we are detaching the young proletarian elements from the factory, not only for the duration of their studies but in general for their whole life: the working youth that has gone through the higher schools will in all probability be assigned, all of them, to the industrial, the state or the party apparatus. This is the second factor in the destruction of the internal equilibrium of the party to the detriment of its fundamental cells, the factory nuclei.

The question of whether the communist is of proletarian, intellectual or other origin obviously has its importance. In the period immediately following the revolution, the question of the profession followed before October even seemed decisive, because the assignment of the workers to this or that Soviet function seemed to be a temporary measure. At the present time, a profound change has taken place in this respect. There is no doubt that the chairmen of the regional committees or the divisional commissars, whatever their social origin, represent a definite social type, regardless of their individual origin. During these six years, fairly stable social groupings have been formed in the Soviet regime.

So it is that at present and for a relatively fairly long period to come, a considerable part of the party, represented by the best trained communists, is absorbed by the different apparatuses of civil, military, economic, *etc.* management and administration; another part, equally important, is doing its studying; a third part is scattered through the countryside where it deals with agriculture; the fourth category alone (which now represents less than a sixth of the membership) is composed of proletarians working at the bench. It is quite clear that the development of the party apparatus and the bureaucratization accompanying this development, are engendered not by the factory cells, linked together through the medium of the apparatus, but by all the other functions that the party exercises through the medium of the state apparatuses of administration, of economic management, of military command, of education. In other words, the source of bureaucratism resides in the growing concentration of the attention and the forces of the party upon the governmental institutions and apparatuses, and in the slowness of the development of industry.

Because of these basic facts and tendencies, we should be fully aware of the dangers of bureaucratic degeneration of the old cadres. It would be vulgar fetishism to consider that just because they have followed the best revolutionary school in the world, they contain within themselves a sure guarantee against any and all dangers of ideological narrowing down and opportunistic degeneration. No! History is made by men, but men do not always make history consciously, not even their own. In the last analysis, the question will be resolved by two great factors of international importance: the course of the revolution in Europe and the rapidity of our economic development. But to reject fatalistically all responsibility for these objective factors would be a mistake of the same stripe as to seek guarantees solely in a subjective radicalism inherited from the past. In the same revolutionary situation, and in the same international conditions, the party will resist the tendencies of disorganization more or resist them less to the extent that it is more or less conscious of the dangers and that it combats these dangers with more or less vigor.

It is plain that the heterogeneity of the party's social composition, far from weakening the negative sides of the old course, aggravates them in the extreme. There is not and cannot be any other means of triumphing over the corporatism, the caste spirit of the functionaries, than by the realization of democracy. By maintaining "calm," party bureaucratism disunites all and everything and deals blows equally, even if differently, to the factory cells, the industrial workers, the army people and the student youth.

The latter, as we have seen, reacts in a particularly vigorous way against bureaucratism. Not for nothing did Lenin propose to draw largely upon the students in order to combat

bureaucratism. By its social composition and its contacts, the student youth reflects all the social groups of our party as well as their state of mind. Its youthfulness and its sensitivity prompt it to give an active form immediately to this state of mind. As a studying youth, it endeavors to explain and to generalize. This is not to say that all its acts and moods reflect healthful tendencies. If this were the case, it would signify one of two things: either that all goes well in the party, or that the youth is no longer the mirror of the party. But neither is true. In principle, it is right to say that the factory cells, and not the institutions of learning, are our base. But by saying that the youth is our barometer, we give its political manifestations not an essential but a symptomatic value. A barometer does not create the weather; it is confined to recording it. In politics, the weather takes shape in the depth of the classes and in those spheres where they enter into contact with each other. The factory cells create a direct and immediate contact between the party and the class of the industrial proletariat, which is essential to us. The rural cells create a much feebler contact with the peasantry. It is mainly through the military cells, situated in special conditions, that we are linked with the peasants. As to the student youth, recruited from all the sections and strata of Soviet society, it reflects in its checkered composition all our merits and demerits, and it would be stupid not to accord the greatest attention to its moods. Besides, a considerable part of our new students are communists with, what is for youth, a fairly substantial revolutionary experience. And the more pugnacious of the "apparatus-men" are making a great mistake in turning up their noses at the youth. The youth are our means of checking up on ourselves, our substitutes; the future belongs to them.

But let us return to the question of the heterogeneity of the groups in the party that are separated from each other by their functions in the state. The bureaucratism of the party, we have said and we now repeat, is not a survival of some preceding regime, a survival in the process of disappearing; on the contrary, it is an essentially new phenomenon, flowing from the new tasks, the new functions, the new difficulties and the new mistakes of the party.

The proletariat realizes its dictatorship through the Soviet state. The communist party is the leading party of the proletariat and, consequently, of its state. The whole question is to realize this leadership without merging into the bureaucratic apparatus of the state, in order not to expose itself to a bureaucratic degeneration.

The communists find themselves variously grouped in the party and the state apparatus. In the latter, they are hierarchically dependent upon each other and stand in complex personal reciprocal relations to the non-party mass. In the party, they are all equal in all that concerns the determination of the tasks and the fundamental working methods of the party. The communists working at the bench are part of the factory committees, administer the enterprises, the trusts and the syndicates, are at the head of the Council of People's Economy, *etc.* In the direction that it exercises over economy, the party takes and should take into account the experience, the observations, the opinions of all its members placed at the various rungs of the ladder of economic administration. The essential, incomparable advantage of our party consists in its being able, at every moment, to look at industry with the eyes of the communist machinist, the communist specialist, the communist director, and the communist merchant, collect the experiences of these mutually complementary workers, draw conclusions from them, and thus determine its line for directing economy in general and each enterprise in particular.

It is clear that such leadership is realizable only on the basis of a vibrant and active democracy inside the party. When, contrariwise, the methods of the "apparatus" prevail, the leadership of the party gives way to administration by its executive organs (committee, bureau, secretary, *etc.*). As this regime becomes consolidated, all affairs are concentrated in the hands of a small group, sometimes only of a secretary, who appoints, removes, gives the instructions, inflicts the penalties, *etc.* With such a degeneration of the leadership,

the principal superiority of the party, its multiple collective experience, retires to the background. Leadership takes on a purely organizational character and frequently degenerates into order-giving and meddling. The party apparatus goes more and more into the details of the tasks of the Soviet apparatus, lives the life of its day-to-day cares, lets itself be influenced increasingly by it and fails to see the forest for the trees.

If the party organization as a collective is always richer in experience than no matter what organ of the state apparatus, the same cannot be said of the functionaries taken as individuals. Indeed, it would be naive to believe that as a result of his title, a secretary unites within himself all the knowledge and all the competence necessary to the leadership of his organization. In reality, he creates for himself an auxiliary apparatus with bureaucratic sections, a bureaucratic machinery of information, and with this apparatus, which brings him close to the Soviet apparatus, he tears himself loose from the life of the party. And as a famous German expression puts it: "You think you are moving others, but in reality it is you who are moved."

The whole daily bureaucratic practice of the Soviet state thus infiltrates the party apparatus and introduces bureaucratism into it. The party, as a collective, does not feel its leadership, because it does not realize it. Hence the discontentment or the lack of understanding, even in those cases where leadership is correctly exercised. But this leadership cannot maintain itself on the right line unless it avoids crumbling up in paltry details, and assumes a systematic, rational and collective character. So it is that bureaucratism not only destroys the internal cohesion of the party, but weakens the necessary exertion of influence by the latter over the state apparatus. This is what completely escapes the notice and the understanding of those who yell the loudest about the leading role of the party in its relationships to the Soviet state.

## Chapter II

### The Question of the Party Generations

In one of the resolutions adopted during the discussion in Moscow, the complaint is made that the question of party democracy has been complicated by discussions on the relationships between the generations, personal attacks, etc. This complaint attests to a certain mental confusion. Personal attacks and the mutual relationships between generations are two entirely different things. To pose now the question of party democracy without analyzing the membership of the party, from the social point of view as well as from the point of view of age and political standing, would be to dissolve it into a void.

It is not by accident that the question of party democracy rose up first of all as a question of relationships between the generations. It is the logical result of the whole evolution of our party. Its history may be divided schematically into four periods: a) quarter of a century of preparation up to October, the only one in history; b) October; c) the period following October; and d) the "new course," that is, the period we are now entering.

Despite its richness, its complexity and the diversity of the stages through which it passed, the period prior to October, it is now realized, was only a preparatory period. October made it possible to check up on the ideology and the organization of the party and its membership. By October, we understand the acutest period of the struggle for power, which can be said to have started approximately with Lenin's "April Theses" and ended with the actual seizure of the state apparatus. Even though it lasted only a few months, it is no less important in content than the whole period of preparation which is measured in years and decades. October not only gave us an unfailing verification, unique in its kind, of the party's great past, but it itself became a source of experience for the future. It was through October that the pre-October party was able for the first time to assess itself at its true worth.

The conquest of power was followed by a rapid, even abnormal, growth of the party. A powerful magnet, the party attracted not only workers with little consciousness, but even

certain elements plainly alien to its spirit: functionaries, careerists and political hangers-on. In this chaotic period, it was able to preserve its Bolshevik nature only thanks to the internal dictatorship of the Old Guard, which had been tested in October. In the more or less important questions, the leadership of the older generation was then accepted almost unchallenged by the new members, not only by the proletarian ranks but by the alien elements. The climbers considered this docility the best way of establishing their own situation in the party. But they miscalculated. In a rigorous purging of its own ranks, the party rid itself of them. Its membership diminished, but its consciousness was enhanced. It may be said that this check-up on itself, this purge, made the post-October party feel itself for the first time a half-million-headed collective whose task was not simply to be led by the Old Guard but to examine and decide for itself the essential questions of policy. In this sense, the purge and the critical period linked with it are the preparation, as it were, of the profound change now manifesting itself in the life of the party and which will probably go down in its history under the name of "*the new course.*"

There is one thing that ought to be clearly understood from the start: the essence of the present disagreements and difficulties does not lie in the fact that the "secretaries" have overreached themselves on certain points and must be called back to order, but in the fact that the *party as a whole is about to move on to a higher historical stage*. The bulk of the communists are saying in effect to the leaders: "You, comrades, have the experience of before October, which most of us are lacking; but under your leadership we have acquired after October a great experience which is constantly growing in significance. And we not only want to be led by you but to participate with you in the leadership of the class. We want it not only because that is our right as party members but also because it is absolutely necessary to the working class as a whole. Without our modest experience, experience which should not merely be taken note of in the leading spheres but which must be introduced into the life of the party by ourselves, the leading party apparatus is growing bureaucratic, and we, rank-and-file communists, do not feel ourselves sufficiently well-armed ideologically when confronting the non-party people."

The present change is, as I have said, the result of the whole precedent evolution. In-visible at first glance, molecular processes in the lift and the consciousness of the party have long been at work preparing it. The market crisis gave a strong impetus to critical thought. The approach of the events in Germany set the party a-quiver. Precisely at this moment it appeared with particular sharpness that the party was living, as it were, on two stories: the upper story, where things are decided, and the lower story, where all you do is learn of the decisions. Nevertheless, the critical revision of the internal regime of the party was postponed by the anxious expectation of what seemed to be the imminent showdown in Germany. When it turned out that this showdown was delayed by the force of things, the party put the question of the "new course" on the order of the day.

As often happens in history, it is precisely during these last months that the "old course" revealed the most negative and most insufferable traits: apparatus cliquism, bureaucratic smugness, and complete disdain for the mood, the thoughts and the needs of the party. Out of bureaucratic inertia, it rejected, from the very beginning, and with an antagonistic violence, the initial attempts to put on the order of the day the question of the critical revision of the internal party regime.

This does not mean, to be sure, that the apparatus is composed exclusively of bureaucratized elements, or even less, of confirmed and incorrigible bureaucrats. Not at all! The present critical period, whose meaning they will assimilate, will teach a good deal to the majority of the apparatus workers and will get them to abandon most of their errors. The ideological and organic regrouping that will come out of the present crisis, will, in the long run, have healthful consequences for the rank and file of the communists as well as for the apparatus. But in the latter, as it appeared on the threshold of the present crisis, bureaucratism has reached an excessive, truly alarming development. And that is what

gives the present ideological regrouping so acute a character as to engender legitimate fears.

It will suffice to point out that, two or three months ago, the mere mention of the bureaucratism of the apparatus, of the excessive authority of the committees and the secretaries, was greeted by the responsible representatives of the "old course," in the central and local organizations, with a shrug of the shoulders or by indignant protestations. Appointment as a system? Pure imagination! Formalism, bureaucratism? Inventions, opposition solely for the pleasure of making opposition, *etc.* These comrades, in all sincerity, did not notice the bureaucratic danger they themselves represent. It is only under pressure from the ranks that they began, little by little, to recognize that there actually were manifestations of bureaucratism, but only somewhere at the organizational periphery, in certain regions and districts, that these were only a deviation in practice from the straight line, *etc.* According to them, bureaucratism was nothing but a survival of the war period, that is, a phenomenon in the process of disappearing, only not fast enough. Needless to say how false are this approach to things and this explanation.

Bureaucratism is not a fortuitous feature of certain provincial organizations, but a general phenomenon. It does not travel from the district to the central organization through the medium of the regional organization, but much rather from the central organization to the district through the medium of the regional organization. It is not at an a "survival" of the war period; it is the result of the transference to the party of the methods and the administrative manners accumulated during these last years. However exaggerated were the forms it sometimes assumed, the bureaucratism of the war period was only child's play in comparison with present-day bureaucratism which grew up in peacetime, while the apparatus, in spite of the ideological growth of the party, continued obstinately to think and decide for the party.

Hence, the unanimously adopted resolution of the Central Committee on the structure of the party has, from the standpoint of principle, an immense importance which the party must be clearly aware of. It would indeed be unworthy to consider that the profound meaning of the decisions taken boils down to a mere demand for more "mildness," more "solicitousness" toward the masses on the part of the secretaries and the committees, and to some technical modifications in the organization. *The resolution of the Central Committee speaks of a "new course," and not for nothing.* The party is preparing to enter into a new phase of development. To be sure, it is not a question of breaking the organizational principles of Bolshevism, as some are trying to have us believe, but to apply them to the conditions of the new stage in the development of the party. It is a question primarily of instituting healthier relations between the old cadres and the majority of the members who came to the party after October.

Theoretical preparation, revolutionary tempering, political experience, these represent the party's basic political capital whose principal possessors, in the first place, are the old cadres of the party. On the other hand, the party is essentially a democratic organization, that is, a collective which decides upon its road by the thought and the will of all its members. It is completely clear that in the complicated situation of the period immediately following October, the party made its way all the better for the fact that it utilized to the full the experience accumulated by the older generation, to whose representatives it entrusted the most important positions in the organization.

On the other hand, the result of this state of things has been that, in playing the role of party leader and being absorbed by the questions of administration, the old generation accustomed itself to think and to decide, as it still does, for the party. For the communist masses, it brings to the forefront purely bookish, pedagogical methods of participating in political life: elementary political training courses, examinations of the knowledge of its members, party schools, *etc.* Thence the bureaucratism of the apparatus, its cliquism, its exclusive internal life, in a word, all the traits that constitute the profoundly negative side

of the old course. The fact that the party lives on two separate stories bears within it numerous dangers, which I spoke of in my letter on the old and the young. By "young," I mean of course not simply the students, but the whole generation that came to the party after October, the factory cells in the first place.

How did this increasingly marked uneasiness of the party manifest itself? In the majority of its members saying or feeling that: "Whether the apparatus thinks and decides well or badly, it continues to think and decide too often without us and for us. When we happen to display lack of understanding or doubts, to express an objection or a criticism, we are called to order, discipline is invoked; most often, we are accused of being obstructors or even of wanting to establish factions. We are devoted to the party to our very marrow and ready to make any sacrifice for it. But we want to participate actively and consciously in working out its views and in determining its course of action." The first manifestations of this state of mind unmistakably passed by unperceived by the leading apparatus which took no account of it, and that was one of the main causes of the anti-party groupings in the party. Their importance should certainly not be exaggerated, but neither should their meaning be minimized, for they ought to be a warning to us.

The chief danger of the old course, a result of general historical causes as well as of our own mistakes, is that the apparatus manifests a growing tendency to counterpose a few thousand comrades, who form the leading cadres, to the rest of the mass whom they look upon only as an object of action. If this regime should persist, it would threaten to provoke, in the long run, a degeneration of the party at both its poles, that is, among the party youth and among the leading cadres. As to the proletarian basis of the party, the factory cells, the students, *etc.*, the character of the peril is clear. Not feeling that they are participating actively in the general work of the party and not getting a timely answer to their questions to the party, numerous communists start looking for a substitute for independent party activity in the form of groupings and factions of all sorts. It is in this sense precisely that we speak of the symptomatic importance of groupings like the "Workers' Group."

But no less great is the danger, at the other pole, of the regime that has lasted too long and become synonymous in the party with bureaucratism. It would be ridiculous, and unworthy ostrich politics, not to understand, or not to want to see, that the accusation of bureaucratism formulated in the resolution of the Central Committee is directed precisely against the cadres of the party. It is not a question of isolated deviations in practice from the ideal line, but precisely of the general policy of the apparatus, of its bureaucratic tendency. Does bureaucratism bear within it a danger of degeneration, or doesn't it? He would be blind who denied it. In its prolonged development, bureaucratization threatens to detach the leaders from the masses, to bring them to concentrate their attention solely upon questions of administration, of appointments and transfers, of narrowing their horizon, of weakening their revolutionary spirit, that is, of provoking a more or less opportunistic degeneration of the Old Guard, or at the very least of a considerable part of it. Such processes develop slowly and almost imperceptibly, but reveal themselves abruptly. To see in this warning, based upon objective Marxian foresight, an "outrage," an "assault," *etc.*, really requires the skittish susceptibility and arrogance of bureaucrats.

But, *in actuality*, is the danger of such a degeneration really great? The fact that the party has understood or felt this danger and has reacted to it energetically—which is what was the specific cause of the resolution of the Central Committee—bears witness to its profound vitality and by that very fact reveals the potent sources of antidote which it has at its disposal against bureaucratic poison. There lies the principal guarantee of its preservation as a revolutionary party. But if the old course should seek to maintain itself at all costs by tightening the reins, by increasingly artificial selection, by intimidation, in a word, by procedures indicating a distrust of the party, the actual danger of degeneration of a considerable part of the cadres would inevitably increase.



The party cannot live solely upon past reserves. It suffices that the past has prepared the present. But the present must be ideologically and practically up to the level of the past in order to prepare the future. The task of the present is to shift the center of party activity toward the masses of the party.

But, it may be said, this shifting of the center of gravity cannot be accomplished at one time, by a leap; the party cannot "put in the archives" the old generation and immediately start living a new life. It is scarcely worth while dwelling on such a stupidly demagogical argument. To want to put the old generation in the archives would be madness. What is needed is that precisely this old generation should change its orientation and, by virtue of that, guarantee in the future the preponderance of its influence upon all the independent activity of the party. It must consider the "new course" not as a manoeuvre, a diplomatic stroke, or a temporary concession, but as a new stage in the political development of the party. In this way, both the generation that leads the party and the party as a whole will reap the greatest benefit.

### Chapter III Groups and Factional Formations

The question of groupings and factions in the party has become the pivot of the discussion. In view of its intrinsic importance and the extreme acuteness that it has assumed, it demands to be treated with perfect clarity. Yet, it is posed in a completely erroneous manner.

We are the only party in the country and, in the period of the dictatorship, it could not be otherwise. The different needs of the working class, of the peasantry, of the state apparatus and of its membership, act upon our party, through whose medium they seek to find a political expression. The difficulties and contradictions inherent in our epoch, the temporary discord in the interests of the different layers of the proletariat, or of the proletariat as a whole and the peasantry, act upon the party through the medium of its worker and peasant cells, of the state apparatus, of the student youth. Even episodic differences in views and nuances of opinion may express the remote pressure of distinct social interests and, in certain circumstances, be transformed into stable groupings; the latter may, in turn, sooner or later take the form of organized factions which, opposing themselves to the rest of the party, undergo by that very fact even greater external pressure. Such is the dialectics of inner-party groupings in an epoch when the communist party is obliged to monopolize the direction of political life.

What follows from this? If factions are not wanted there must not be any permanent groupings; if permanent groupings are not wanted, temporary groupings must be avoided; finally, in order that there be no temporary groupings, there must be no differences of opinion, for wherever there are two opinions, people inevitably group together. But how, on the other hand, do we avoid differences of opinion in a party of half a million men which is leading the country in exceptionally complicated and painful conditions? That is the essential contradiction residing in the very situation of the party of the proletarian dictatorship, a contradiction that cannot be escaped solely by purely formal measures.

The partisans of the "old course" who vote for the resolution of the Central Committee with the assurance that everything will remain as in the past, reason something like this: Just look, the lid of our apparatus has just scarcely been raised and already tendencies toward groupings of all sorts are manifesting themselves in the party. The lid must be jammed back on and the pot closed hermetically. It is this short-sighted wisdom that pervades dozens of speeches and articles "against factionalism." In their heart of hearts, the apparatus-men believe that the resolution of the Central Committee is either a political mistake that they must try to render harmless, or else an apparatus stratagem that must be utilized. In my view, they are grossly mistaken. And if there is a tactic calculated to introduce disorganization into the party it is the one followed by people who persist in the old orientation while feigning to accept respectfully the new.

It is in contradictions and differences of opinion that the working out of the party's public opinion inevitably takes place. To localize this process *only* within the apparatus which is then charged to furnish the party with the fruit of its labors in the form of slogans, orders, *etc.*, is to sterilize the party ideologically and politically. To have the party as a whole participate in the working out and adoption of the resolutions, is to promote temporary ideological groupings that risk transformation into durable groupings and even into factions. What to do? Is it possible that there is no way out? *Is it possible that there is no intermediate line between the regime of "calm" and that of crumbling into factions?* No, there is one, and the whole task of the leadership consists, each time that it is necessary and especially at turning points, in finding this line corresponding to the real situation of the moment.

The resolution of the Central Committee says plainly that the bureaucratic regime is one of the sources of factions. That is a truth which now hardly needs to be demonstrated. The old course was far indeed from "full-blown" democracy, and yet it no more preserved the party from illegal factions than the present stormy discussion which—it would be ridiculous to shut one's eyes to this—may lead to the formation of temporary or durable groupings. *To avert it, the leading organs of the party must lend an ear to the voice of the broad party mass, not consider every criticism as a manifestation of factional spirit, and thereby drive conscientious and disciplined communists to maintain a systematic silence or else constitute themselves as factions.*

But doesn't this way of putting the question come down to a justification of Myaznikov and his partisans? We hear the voice of higher bureaucratic wisdom. Why? In the first place, the phrase we have just underlined is only a textual extract from the resolution of the Central Committee. Further, since when does an *explanation* equal a *justification*? To say that an abscess is the result of defective blood circulation due to an insufficient flow of oxygen, is not to "justify" the abscess and to consider it a normal part of the human organism. The only conclusion is that the abscess must be lanced and disinfected and, above all, the window must be opened to let fresh air provide the oxygen needed by the blood. But the trouble is that the most militant wing of the "old course" is convinced that the resolution of the Central Committee is erroneous, especially in its passage on bureaucracy as a source of factionalism. And if it does not say so openly, it is only out of formal considerations, quite in keeping with its mentality, drenched with that formalism which is the essential attribute of bureaucracy.

It is incontestable that factions are a scourge in the present situation, and that groupings, even if temporary, may be transformed into factions. But as experience shows, it is not at all enough to declare that groupings and factions are an evil for their appearance to be prevented. What is needed to bring this about is a certain policy, a correct course adapted to the real situation.

It suffices to study the history of our party, even if only for the period of the revolution, that is, during the period when the constitution of factions became particularly dangerous, to see that the struggle against this danger cannot be confined, to a formal condemnation and prohibition of groupings.

It was in the fall of 1917 that the most formidable disagreement broke out in the party, on the occasion of the capital question of the seizure of power. With the furious pace of events, the acuteness of the struggle immediately gave an extreme factional character to the disagreements: perhaps without wanting to, the opponents of the violent uprising made in fact a bloc with non-party elements, published their declarations in outside organs, *etc.* At that moment, the unity of the party hung by a hair. How was the split to be averted? Only by the rapid development of events and their favorable outcome. The split would have taken place inevitably if the events had dragged along for several months, all the more so if the insurrection had ended in defeat. Under the firm leadership of the majority of the Central Committee, the party, in an impetuous offensive, moved over the head of the opposition,

the power was conquered, and the opposition, not very great numerically but qualitatively very strong, adopted the platform of October. The faction and the danger of a split were overcome at that time not by formal decisions based upon party statutes, but by revolutionary action.

The second great disagreement arose on the occasion of the Brest-Litovsk peace. The partisans of revolutionary war then constituted a genuine faction, with its own central organ, *etc.* How much truth there is in the recent anecdote about Bukharin being almost prepared, at one time, to arrest the government of Lenin, I am unable to say. Generally speaking, this looks a little like a bad Mayne Reed story or a communist Pinkerton tale. It may be presumed that the history of the party will take note of this. However that may be, the existence of a left-communist faction represented an extreme danger to the unity of the party. To have brought about a split at the time would not have been difficult and would not have demanded of the leadership any great intellectual effort: it would have sufficed to issue an interdict against the left-communist faction. Nevertheless, the party adopted more complex methods: it preferred to discuss, to explain, to prove by experience and to resign itself temporarily to the abnormal and anomalous phenomenon represented by the existence of an organized faction in its midst.

The question of military organization likewise produced the constitution of a fairly strong and obdurate grouping, opposed to the creation of a regular army and all that flowed from it: a centralized military apparatus, specialists, *etc.* At times, the struggle assumed extreme sharpness. But as in October, the question was settled by experience, by the war itself. Certain blunders and exaggerations of the official military policy were attenuated, not without the pressure of the opposition, and that not only without damage but with profit to the centralized organization of the regular army. As to the opposition, it fell apart little by little. A great number of its most active representatives participated in the organization of the army in which, in many cases, they occupied important posts.

Clearly defined groupings were constituted at the time of the memorable discussion on the trade unions. Now that we have the possibility of embracing this entire period at a glance and of illuminating it in the light of subsequent experience, we can record that the discussion in no wise revolved around the trade unions, nor even workers' democracy: what was expressed in these disputes was a profound uneasiness in the party, caused by the excessive prolonging of the economic regime of war communism. The entire economic organism of the country was in a vise. The discussion on the role of the trade unions and of workers' democracy covered up the search for a new economic road. The way out was found in the elimination of the requisitioning of food products and of the grain monopoly, and in the gradual liberation of state industry from the tyranny of the central economic managements. These historical decisions were taken unanimously and completely overshadowed the trade union discussion, all the more so because of the fact that following the establishment of the NEP, the very role of the trade unions themselves appeared in a completely different light and, several months later, the resolution on the trade unions had to be modified radically.

The longest lasting grouping and, from certain angles, the most dangerous one, was the "Workers' Opposition." It reflected, although distortedly, the contradictions of war communism, certain mistakes of the party, as well as the essential objective difficulties of socialist organization. But this time, too, we did not confine ourselves merely to a formal prohibition. On the questions of democracy, formal decisions were made, and on the purging of the party effective and extremely important measures were taken, satisfying what was just and healthy in the criticism and the demands of the "Workers' Opposition." And the main thing is that, due to the decisions and the economic measures adopted by the party, the result of which was to bring about the disappearance of the differences of opinions and the groupings, the Tenth Congress was able to prohibit formally the constitution of factions, with reason to believe that its decisions would not remain a dead letter. But as

experience and good political sense show, it goes without saying that by itself this prohibition contained no absolute or even serious guarantee against the appearance of new ideological and organic groupings. The essential guarantee, in this case, is a correct leadership, paying opportune attention to the needs of the moment which are reflected in the party, flexibility of the apparatus which ought not paralyze but rather organize the initiative of the party, which ought not fear criticism, nor intimidate the party with the bugbear of factions: intimidation is most often a product of fright. The decision of the Tenth Congress prohibiting factions can only have an auxiliary character; by itself it does not offer the key to the solution of any and all internal difficulties. It would be gross "organizational fetishism" to believe that whatever the development of the party, the mistakes of the leadership, the conservatism of the apparatus, the external influences, *etc.*, a decision is enough to preserve us from groupings and from upheavals inherent in the formation of factions. Such an approach is in itself profoundly bureaucratic.

A striking example of this is provided us by the history of the Petrograd organization. Shortly after the Tenth Congress, which forbade the constitution of groupings and factions, a very lively organizational struggle broke out in Petrograd, leading to the formation of two dearly antagonistic groupings. The simplest thing to do, at first blush, would have been to declare one of the groups (at least one) to be pernicious, criminal, factional, *etc.* But the Central Committee refused categorically to employ this method, which was suggested to it from Petrograd. It assumed the role of arbiter between the two groupings and succeeded, not right away, to be sure, in assuring not only their collaboration but their complete fusion in the organization. There you have an important example which deserves being kept in mind and might serve to light up some bureaucratic skulls.

We have said above that every important and lasting grouping in the party, to say nothing of every organized faction, has the tendency to become the spokesman of some social interests. Every *incorrect* deviation may, in the course of its development, become the expression of the interests of a class hostile or half-hostile to the proletariat. But first of all this applies to bureaucratism. It is necessary to begin right there. That bureaucratism is an incorrect deviation, and an unhealthy deviation, will not, let us hope, be contested. This being the case, it threatens to lead the party off the right road, the class road. That is precisely where its danger lies. But here is a fact that is instructive in the highest degree and at the same time most alarming: those comrades who assert most flatly, with the greatest insistence and sometimes most brutally that *every* difference of opinion, every grouping of opinion, however temporary, is an expression of the interests of classes opposed to the proletariat, do not want to apply this criterion to bureaucratism.

Yet, the social criterion is, in the given instance, perfectly in place, for bureaucratism is a well-defined evil, a notorious and incontestably injurious deviation, officially condemned but not at all in the process of disappearing. Moreover, it is pretty difficult to make it disappear at one blow! But if, as the resolution of the Central Committee says, bureaucratism threatens to *detach the party from the masses*, and consequently to weaken the class character of the party, it follows that the struggle against bureaucratism can in no case be identified in advance with some kind of non-proletarian influence. On the contrary, the aspiration of the party to preserve its proletarian character must inevitably generate resistance to bureaucratism. Naturally, under cover of this resistance, various erroneous, unhealthy and harmful tendencies may manifest themselves. They cannot be laid bare save by the Marxian analysis of their ideological content. But to identify resistance to bureaucratism with a grouping which allegedly serves as a channel for alien influences is to be oneself the "channel" of bureaucratic influences.

Nevertheless, there should be no oversimplification and vulgarization in the understanding of the thought that party differences, and this holds all the more for groupings, are nothing but a struggle for influence of antagonistic classes. Thus, in 1920, the question of the invasion of Poland stirred up two currents of opinion, one advocating a more audacious

policy, the other preaching prudence. Were there different class tendencies there? I do not believe that anyone would risk such an assertion. There were only divergences in the appreciation of the situation, of the forces, of the means. But the essential criterion of the appreciation was the same with both parties.

It frequently happens that the party is able to resolve one and the same problem by different means, and differences arise as to which of these means is the better, the more expeditious, the more economical. These differences may, depending on the question, embrace considerable sections of the party, but that does not necessarily mean that you have there two class tendencies.

There is no doubt that we shall have not one but dozens of disagreements in the future, for our path is difficult and the political tasks as well as the economic questions of socialist organization will unfailingly engender differences of opinion and temporary groupings of opinion. The political verification of all the nuances of opinion by Marxian analysis will always be one of the most efficacious preventive measures for our party. But it is this concrete Marxian verification that must be resorted to, and not the stereotyped phrases which are the defense mechanism of bureaucracy. The heterogeneous political ideology which is now rising up against bureaucracy can be all the better checked, and purged of all alien and injurious elements, the more seriously the road of the "new course" is entered upon. However, this is impossible without a serious change in the mentality and the intentions of the party apparatus. But we are witness, on the contrary, to a new offensive at the present time by the latter, which rejects every criticism of the "old course," formally condemned but not yet liquidated, by treating it as a manifestation of factional spirit. If factionalism is dangerous—and it is—it is criminal to shut your eyes to the danger represented by *conservative bureaucratic factionalism*. It is against precisely this danger that the resolution of the Central Committee is primarily directed.

The maintenance of the unity of the party is the gravest concern of the great majority of communists. But it must be said openly: If there is today a serious danger to the unity or at the very least to the unanimity of the party, it is unbridled bureaucracy. This is the camp in which provocative voices have been raised. That is where they have dared to say: We are not afraid of a split! It is the representatives of this tendency who thumb through the past, seeking out everything likely to inject more rancor into the discussion, resuscitating artificially the recollections of the old struggle and the old split in order to accustom imperceptibly the mind of the party to the possibility of a crime as monstrous and as disastrous as a new split. They seek to set against each other the need of party unity and the party's need of a less bureaucratic regime.

If the party allowed itself to take this road, and sacrificed the vital elements of its own democracy, it would only succeed in exacerbating its internal struggle and in upsetting its cohesion. You cannot demand of the party confidence in the apparatus when you yourself have no confidence in the party. There is the whole question. Preconceived bureaucratic distrust of the party, of its consciousness and its spirit of discipline, is the principal cause of all the evils generated by the domination of the apparatus. The party does not want factions and will not tolerate them. It is monstrous to believe that it will shatter or permit anyone to shatter its apparatus. It knows that this apparatus is composed of the most valuable elements, who incarnate the greatest part of the experience of the past. But it wants to renew it and to remind it that it *is its* apparatus, that it is elected by it and that it must not detach itself from it.

Upon reflecting well on the situation created in the party, which has shown itself in a particularly clear light in the course of the discussion, it may be seen that the future presents itself under a double perspective. Either the organic ideological regrouping that is now taking place in the party along the line of the resolutions of the Central Committee will be a step forward on the road of the organic growth of the party, the beginning of a new great chapter—which would be the most desirable outcome for us all, the one most beneficial to the party, which would then easily overcome any excesses in the discussion

and in the opposition, to say nothing of vulgar democratic tendencies. Or else, the apparatus, passing over to the offensive, will come more and more under the power of its most conservative elements and, on the pretext of combatting factions, will throw the party backward and restore "calm." This second eventuality would be by far the most grievous one; it would not prevent the development of the party, it goes without saying, but this development would take place only at the cost of considerable efforts and upheavals. For this method would only foster still more the tendencies that are injurious, disintegrative and hostile to the party. These are the two eventualities to envisage.

My letter on the "new course" had as its purpose to aid the party to take the first road, which is the most economical and the most correct. And I stand fully by the position in it, rejecting any tendentious or deceitful interpretation.

Leon Trotsky, *The New Course*: 11-38; *Pravda*, 28 and 29 December 1923, and *International Press Correspondence*, IV, no. 16 (29 February 1924): 133-141.



## AN OPPOSITION CRITIQUE OF THE PARTY'S ECONOMIC POLICY

29 December 1923

*V. V. Ossinsky, one of the "Forty-six" and a veteran of the party's Democratic Centralist and Left Opposition, managed to put forth a counter-proposal to the economic policy approved by the Politburo on 24 December (see above). This was in the form of a motion at a meeting of party organizations and "active party workers" of the Moscow Party Organization, a common forum for the discussions of the fall of 1923. It contained many of the basic criticisms of the economic policy of the party leadership. His motion failed.*

V. V. Ossinsky

### RESOLUTION ON "THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF ECONOMIC POLICY"

In view of the fact that the resolution of the Political Bureau of the C. C. on the "Immediate Tasks of the Economic Policy" represents mainly an exposition of the resolutions adopted by the 12th Congress of the Russian CP, with the addition, however, of some new proposals of doubtful worth and the omission of some questions which have become ripe, the meeting considers it necessary to amend the resolution of the Political Bureau in the following fundamental respects:

1. It is necessary, not only to bring forward the questions regarding the fundamental and decisive significance of knitting together the nationalized industries and the peasant economy, but also to explain the reasons for which this knitting together has not been realized during the past period and the reasons why the connecting of the villages with the private home industry and with private commercial capital have developed more successfully. The fundamental reasons for all this are: the lack of a plan uniting the work of all the branches of state economy, the casualness and the unsystematized work of the leading organs, and in connection with this, the disharmony and crudeness prevalent in the work of the whole economic peripheries.

Though reproaching "a number of economic organs" for having incorrectly applied the directive of the 12th Congress, and for having raised the prices higher than was justified, the resolution loses sight of the fact that such a reproach implies also the lack of leadership on the part of the highest organs in the commercial activity of the economic organs. The reproach in the first place must therefore be directed against the highest organs.

2. Setting aside the question as to whether, under the conditions of the NEP, crises are unavoidable, or whether it is only so-called "depressions" which are unavoidable, it is necessary to state that the present crisis has nothing to do with such unavoidable economic disturbances. It is not the result either of a sudden reduction in the demand from the peasants, resulting from a bad harvest (which might be a possible cause of a depression and would not be overcome), or of a change in the movement of world prices. It is also impossible to explain it by pointing out the disparity between industrial and agricultural production, a disparity which, it is alleged, results from objective factors. If the development of the state industry is proceeding in an elementary way, and is not balanced to the development of agriculture, this is due to the lack of a plan of management.

The principal causes of the present crisis are: a) the chaotic nature of our industrial construction; b) the casual and improper credit policy; owing to the latter, in the period of spring and summer 1923, the financial means of the state bank were totally engaged in operations of industry and wholesale trade on unsound basis and without retaining a reserve for the autumn period of grain crop.

The resolution must be modified, in order to state the real causes of the crisis and in order to make clear the concrete faults committed; to screen these faults means to prevent their being corrected.

3. In the resolution of the Political Bureau, there is no mention of the question of the administration of industry, which has a tremendous importance among the actual tasks of economic policy. It is necessary to put forward and work out concretely the question of establishing a close connection between the trusts, which at present in fact are autonomous, on the one hand, and the Supreme National Economic Council on the other, as well as the task of creating a firm and well-connected system of state economy on the basis of an economic plan and of a correct leadership of the state enterprises. This will strengthen to the highest degree the position of our state economy in its struggle against private capital and also in regard to a real knitting together of the state industry with the villages.

4. The resolution of the Political Bureau, in one of its points, lays down a totally incorrect task, namely to include in the calculation of the price of products merely "the necessary minimum profit". Such a task implies a revocation of the resolution of the 12th Congress and a transition to the position of a common bourgeois "fiscal economy." It excludes the possibility of basing the state budget on incomes deriving from industry. The corresponding task can only be formulated as follows: "obtaining the greatest profit with a given average price and with the obligation to strive to reduce the price by means of enlarging and perfecting the working capacity".

5. The resolution of the Political Bureau does not give a correct estimation of the successes of private capital which has already come into possession of 14% of the wholesale trade, 15% of the wholesale-retail and 80% of the small trade, and has also accumulated large sums in goods and stable values. It is necessary to dedicate far greater attention than hitherto to the work in the sphere of commerce. In connection with this it is necessary (see Comrade Lenin's article on cooperation), in the fight against private commercial capital, to bring to the forefront the co-operative organizations, elaborating a plan of increased credits to them, both by supplying them with goods from the state industry and also with financial means.

6. The demand for an active trade balance put forward in the resolution occupies a very extended, but completely unjustified position. This demand, in its essence, means to export as much as possible, to import as little as possible and furthermore only to import means of production. It means to accumulate the difference in the form of a gold fund.

Regard, however, must be had to the following:

a) Soviet Russia cannot allow herself the luxury of spending means for the transition from bank notes to metal currency, but must spend these means for productive purposes;

b) the import of the necessary industrial raw materials (cotton) is to be developed as much as possible;

c) the private importation of articles for mass consumption in which we are lacking could be the principal and most profitable weapon for the state in its fight against speculation in goods;

d) the importation of articles for peasants' consumption is a very important means for developing our export. From this point of view it is necessary not to strive for the great preponderance of exports over imports, but at maintaining a solid equilibrium between the first and the second.

On the other hand, to the extent to which Soviet Russia obtains foreign loans and will be able to commence a large-scale importation of means of production, and partially also of articles of consumption in which she is lacking, her commercial balance can become a negative one without any detriment to the development of the productive forces, because her financial balance will be a positive one.

It is necessary, not to proclaim the abstract slogan of an active trade balance, but to proceed towards elaborating a rational import plan and to make a large use of goods intervention (i.e. partial importation from abroad of goods which we lack and of those of which the price has particularly increased.)

7. The face of a well thought out credit policy, the practical autonomy of the state bank (for instance the abolition of credits of industry which took place in autumn without the consent of the State Planning Commission and the Supreme national Economic Council), the attempt, instead of aiming at a general economic plan, to regulate economy from the financial center, the failure of these methods of a unique "planning"—all this demands decisive steps towards including the plan of the distribution of credits into the general economic plan, and also a corresponding modification of the mutual relations between the state bank and the State Planning Commission.

8. The central question of the proletarian economic policy in the sphere of industry is the work for systematically improving the position of the working class. Successes in this direction are the most important guarantee for industrial successes. Measures for raising the standard of life of the workers and also for strengthening, reviving and freeing our trade unions from the stultifying influence of absolute "Party tranquility" must be elaborated on a larger scale and more carefully.

It is necessary also to bring forward and to elaborate the question of measures for the fight against unemployment, a question which has been totally omitted from the resolution of the Political Bureau. It is also necessary to remark that the establishment of planning in our economic construction, introducing it into the system of our state industry will, by facilitating the accumulation of productive responses on the part of the state, become a powerful factor, reducing unemployment and raising the standard of life of the proletariat.

9. The fact that the resolution of the Political Bureau recognizes the practical necessity of implementing the resolutions of the 12th Congress regarding the State Planning Commission, and in general regarding the establishment of a planned administration of economy, can only be welcomed. But to the natural question, why this was not done after the 12th Congress, the resolution gives an evasive answer which is not to the point, and which provokes grave reflections regarding the future. The resolution connects the possibility of a planned administration with the introduction of a stable valuta and thereby seeks to explain the dilatoriness in executing the resolutions of the 12th Congress, by the necessity of first of all implementing currency reform. Such a presentation of the question is incorrect and dangerous because, without the general and uninterrupted balance of finances with the other elements of the state and national economy, there can be no talk of securing a stable currency. It is incorrect to assume that the pre-requisites for the planned administration of economy can be prepared piecemeal. It is precisely this way of handling



the matter which from time to time, causes a sharp disparity in the fundamental factors of economy and which appears to be one of the main causes of the present crisis, which, to a considerable extent, seems to be a crisis of disparity and of lack of provision.

10. The tremendous importance and the complicated nature of the questions which the resolution of the Political Bureau places before the Party for discussion, necessitate a detailed handling of all their points in the press, the publishing of the most important figures and material regarding all the most important questions of economy, the edition of special manuals and the like—all of which has not been done up to the present. The discussion on the economic construction was introduced in such a way that it cannot be correctly developed and utilized by the outlying sections of the Party, and by the mass of the rank and file nuclei. If we wish to have a really general party discussion these faults and omissions must be immediately remedied.

*International Press Correspondence*, IV, no. 20 (14 March 1924): 165-66.



## 2 THE YEAR 1924

### PARTY DENUNCIATION OF TROTSKY, THE OTHER OPPOSITIONISTS AND "PETTY BOURGEOIS TENDENCIES"

18 January 1924

*The party leadership mobilized the party organizations to crush the oppositionists. This resolution was passed at the Thirteenth Party Conference. Of particular importance was the decision to publish clause seven of the 1921 Tenth Party Congress resolution "On Party Unity" (see volume two of Documents of Soviet History). This clause, providing for expulsion of Central Committee members from the Party, had not been made public at the time. The leaders took care to emphasize its Leninist origin. Combined with other statements warning against factionalism and threatening expulsion from the Party, it signaled the leadership's growing willingness to use this weapon, one Stalin especially would use so effectively in the following political struggles of the 1920s. Noteworthy also was the stress on youth studying "Leninism," which was already being elevated to an ideology in its own right.*

### ON THE RESULTS OF THE DISCUSSION AND ON PETTY BOURGEOIS DEVIATION IN THE PARTY [Resolution of the Thirteenth Party Conference]

#### I

#### The Origin of the Discussion

Already the Plenary Session of the Central Committee in September 1923, and still earlier the Political Bureau of the C. C. of our Party, long before any appearance of the "opposition," broached the question of the necessity of reviving party activity and strengthening the workers' democracy within the Party.

On the one hand, the improvement in industry, which put an end to the declassing of the proletariat, the cultural raising of the working class and the growth of activity among it, created more favorable conditions for putting into actual practice the principles of inner party democracy. On the other hand, the economic conflicts of the summer—which in

themselves constitute no danger, and were far more limited than those in the past—indicated that in some places the connection of the party organizations with the non-party working mass was not firm enough.

The Central Committee of the Party realized that the transition to a new course had to be accomplished in a very deliberate and cautious manner, and after thorough preparation. Conscious of this, in September 1923, the C. C. of the Party, proceeded to do preparatory work in this sphere.

At this moment, the old oppositional groups and subgroups, the policy of which had been condemned by the Party more than once, thought the time opportune for proceeding to attack the C.C. of the Party. Calculating that the question of inner party democracy would arouse a keener attention on the part of all members of the Party, the opposition groups resolved to exploit this slogan in the interests of their factions. After the September resolution of the Plenary Session of the C. C. of the RCP, appeared the letter of Comrade Trotsky and, following it, the letter of the forty-six opposition comrades. These documents gave a totally incorrect and ultra-factional estimation of the economic situation in the country, and of the inner state of the Party. They predicted a profound economic crisis in the Republic and an inner crisis in the Party, and brought forward charges against the C.C. of the Party of leading the Party in an incorrect way.

The harm caused by these factional actions of Comrade Trotsky and of the forty-six was still further increased by the fact that the above mentioned letters immediately became the common property of wide circles of party members and were disseminated throughout the districts, among the student youth of Moscow and, immediately afterwards, spread throughout the whole Soviet Union.

The October Joint Session of the Plenums of the C.C. and the C. C. C., with the participation of representatives of ten of the largest party organizations, rightly condemned the action of Comrade Trotsky and the forty-six as an act of factionalism and at the same time the Joint Plenums of the C.C. and the C.C.C. unanimously approved of the initiative of the Political Bureau regarding the question of reviving the inner party activity and of strengthening the workers' democracy. The joint Plenums of the C.C. and the C.C.C. decided not to carry the disputes raised by Comrade Trotsky and by the forty-six beyond the confines of the C.C., neither to publish the letters of Comrade Trotsky and of the forty-six nor the answer of the Political Bureau and the resolution of the C.C. and the C.C.C. condemning the opposition, which was adopted with a majority of 102 against 2 with ten abstentions.

Nevertheless, Trotsky and his forty-six followers did not subordinate themselves to the decisions of such an authoritative party institution, and continued a systematic offensive against the C.C. of the Party, at first in broad circles of the Moscow organization, and afterwards also throughout the whole Soviet Union.

The Political Bureau, following the decision of the joint Plenums, proceeded to the elaboration of the resolution on the inner party situation and on the workers' democracy. Notwithstanding the factional action of Comrade Trotsky, the majority of the Political Bureau deemed it necessary to arrive at an agreement with him. As a result of protracted efforts on the part of the majority of the Political Bureau, there was unanimously adopted and published on the 5th December 1923, the Resolution of the Political Bureau of the C.C. and of the Presidium of the C.C.C., concerning the party structure. One of the most disputed questions, when elaborating the resolution of the Political Bureau of the C.C. and of the Presidium of the C.C.C., had been the question of the factions. In the elaboration of the above-mentioned resolution, Comrade Trotsky at first did not raise objections to the prohibition of the factions, but at the same time he insisted that the liberty of groupings not be forbidden. Nevertheless, a unanimously agreed formulation was arrived at which, as regards the question of factions, referred to the resolution of the 10th Congress of the RCP.

But the "opposition" continued its factional fight. While the majority of the C.C. and the C.C.C., bound by their own resolution not to publish certain documents, loyally carried out this decision, the "opposition" continued to disseminate its factional documents. Two days after the publication of the unanimously adopted resolution of the Political Bureau of the C.C. and the C.C.C., Comrade Trotsky published his renowned letter entitled "The New Course," which in reality was a factional manifesto against the C.C. The articles of Comrade Trotsky which appeared immediately after it, emphasized still further the factionalism of his proceedings just as did the brochure of Comrades Trotsky ("The New Course") which appeared on the day of the opening of the Soviet Union Party Conference.

From the moment of the appearance of the faction manifesto of Comrade Trotsky, the fight became still more aggravated. The "opposition" instituted a campaign unparalleled in the history of our Party, against the C.C. in Moscow, in particular in the military nuclei and in the nuclei of the high schools, by sowing mistrust of the C.C. of the Party. Representatives of the "opposition" consists of members of the former group of "democratic centralism," which has been fighting against the party line for years past. To this core there have joined several former members of the C.C. (Preobrazhensky, Smirnov, Serebryakov) who, on Comrade Lenin's proposal, were not re-elected at the 10th Congress of the RCP. This entire oppositional bloc has at its head Comrade Trotsky and for this reason assumed for the first time a certain authority.

## II

### The Ideological Import of the "Opposition"

The most important points of disagreement between the overwhelming majority of our Party and the present "opposition," as evidenced by the course of the discussion, are contained in the following six items:

1. The "opposition," with Comrade Trotsky at its head, issued the slogan of shattering the party apparatus and attempted to transfer the center of gravity of the fight against bureaucratism in the state apparatus, towards "bureaucratism" in the party apparatus. Such a summary criticism of and direct attempt to discredit the party apparatus, can objectively lead to no other results than to the emancipation of the state apparatus from the influence exercises over it by the Party and to the estrangement of the state organs from the influence of the Party. The tendency towards the estrangement of the state organs from the influence of the Party, was shown by Comrade Trotsky already before the 12th Congress of the R.C.P. In the present discussion this tendency merely assumed another form.

2. The "opposition" tried to set the party youth against the fundamental mainstays of the Party and against its Central Committee. Instead of teaching the youth that our Party must orientate itself to its fundamental proletarian core, to the Communist workers engaged at the bench, the "opposition," headed by Comrade Trotsky, sought to prove that the "barometer" of the Party is the student youth.

3. Comrade Trotsky made general allusions to the degeneration of the fundamental mainstays of our Party, and thereby tried to undermine the authority of the Central Committee which, between the Congresses constitutes the only representative of the whole Party. Comrade Trotsky not only attempted to oppose himself to the whole of the rest of the Central Committee, but he also brought forward such charges which could not but provoke unrest among broad circles of the working class and stormy protests from the ranks of the whole Party.

4. In the questions of economy, the "opposition" showed the greatest bankruptcy, since it was unable to bring forward anything to confirm its charges against the C.C. of the Party, and since it did not even attempt to oppose the policy of the Party any kind of systematic proposals regarding the economic questions.

In the criticism of the economic policy of the Party on the part of the "opposition," two shades of opinion were to be observed. One section of the "opposition" abandoned itself to a considerable degree of the "left" phraseology against the NEP in general, by marking declarations which would only possess any relevance in the event of these comrades

recommending that the New Economic Policy be given up and a return made to War Communism. The other, far more influential, section of the "opposition"—on the contrary—reproaches the C. C. for not working sufficiently to meet foreign capital, and for making insufficient concessions to the imperialist states and the like. This section of the "opposition" (Radek) came forward with direct proposals to revise those conditions which the Party endorsed in connection with the Geneva Conference, and to grant greater concessions to international imperialism, in order to strengthen commercial relations with international capital. The Party unhesitatingly rejected both these errors.

5. The "opposition," in all its shadings, disclosed entirely non-Bolshevik views in regard to the importance of party discipline. The attitude of a whole number of representatives of the "opposition" constitutes in itself an unheard of infringement of party discipline, and calls to mind the occasions when Comrade Lenin was compelled to fight against the "anarchism of the intelligentsia" in organizational questions, and to defend the fundamentals of proletarian discipline in the Party.

6. The "opposition" has openly violated the resolution of the 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party, which forbids the formation of factions within the Party. The Bolshevik conception of the Party as being an undivided whole is substituted on the part of the "opposition" by the conception of the Party as being a sum of all kind of tendencies and factions. These tendencies, factions and groupings, according to the "new" opinions of the "opposition," must enjoy equal rights within the Party and the C.C. of the Party has to appear, not so much as a leader of the Party, but as a simple recorder and intermediary between the tendencies and the groupings. Such a conception of the Party has nothing to do with Leninism. The faction work of the "opposition" could not fail to become anything else than a threat to the unity of the state apparatus. The factional activities of the "opposition" have revived the hopes of all the foes of the Party, including also the Western European bourgeoisie, for a schism in the ranks of the R.C.P. These factional actions have again put forward, acutely, the question as to whether the R.C.P. as the governing party will allow the formation of factional groupings within the Party.

Summing up the results of these disagreements, and analyzing the whole character of the activities of the representatives of the "opposition," the Soviet Union Party Conference arrives at the conclusion that in the form of the present "opposition," we have before us not only an attempt at a revision of Bolshevism, not only a direct aberration from Leninism, but also a blatant petty bourgeois deviation. There is no doubt that this "opposition" objectively reflects the pressure of the petty bourgeoisie on the position of the proletarian party and on its policy. The principles of inner party democracy are already, outside the Party, beginning to be the objects of very elastic interpretations, in the sense of a weakening of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of an enlarging of the political rights of the new bourgeoisie.

In such a situation when the R.C.P., embodying the dictatorship of the proletariat, enjoys the monopoly of legality in the country, it is unavoidable that the least steadfast groups of Communists surrender themselves to non-proletarian influences at times. The Party as a whole must clearly recognize these dangers and carefully preserve the proletarian line of the Party.

Against this petty bourgeois deviation, a systematic and energetic fight of our whole Party is necessary.

### III

#### The Positive Results of the Discussion

The growth of activity and the raising of the cultural level of broad strata of non-party workers and a portion of the working peasants appears to be a new factor which, given an appropriate policy on the part of the Party, will bring the greatest advantage to the cause of revolution. In order to be fully adequate for these tasks, in order to have the possibility of leading this mass strata of workers and propertyless peasants, who are striving to participate actively in the construction of socialism, the Party itself had to revive and to

stimulate its inner life at all costs. In this sense the discussion, notwithstanding the petty bourgeois deviation of the "opposition," has brought considerable advantage to the Party.

The petty bourgeois errors of the "opposition" have been promptly and energetically rectified by the Party. As soon as the discussion began within the Party, one after the other of the strongest proletarian organizations of the R.C.P. intervened with a severe criticism of the petty bourgeois waverings of the "opposition" and with support for the line of the C.C. First of all, as has always been the case hitherto on the occasion of principle debates in the Party, there intervened the oldest Bolshevik workers' organization—the Petrograd organization of the R.C.P. The letter of the Petrograd organization was fully endorsed by dozens of the strongest proletarian organizations of the Soviet Union. The resolution of the Moscow Provincial Conference, adopted by a huge majority, expressed the same decisive condemnation of the "opposition." At the moment of the Soviet Union Party Conference, the whole Party, in its absolute overwhelming majority, unanimously condemned the petty bourgeois aberration.

As a result of the discussion, the fundamental mainstay of the Party has closed its ranks still more firmly. The workers' nuclei in the whole Soviet Union, without a moment's hesitation, immediately resisted in the most determined manner the errors of the "opposition." The young generations of the Party, who witnessed for the first time acute disputes within the Party, were given the opportunity of realizing by a living example, what real Bolshevism is. The young Communists of the Communist Youth Union, being nearest to the factory life, without any hesitation, supported the fundamental line of the Party. The waverings of a part of the student youth in the high schools were a passing phenomenon. With appropriate instructive work on the part of the Party, these waverings will soon be overcome.

The activity and the class-consciousness of all party members have increased. Again there were opened up the earnest economic and party questions which will be worked out by the Party in the course of the next period.

With particular acuteness there was emphasized the striving of the whole Party to secure party unity. The least allusion to the possibility of the danger of a split provoked, and continues to provoke, the sharpest and most stormy protest on the part of the whole mass of party members. The Party will politically annihilate anybody who will venture to attack the unity of the party ranks. The party unity is secured more than ever.

#### IV

#### Practical Conclusions

Taking in account the whole situation of the masses of the Party, the Soviet Union Party Conference considers it necessary:

1. To enlarge at any cost the proletarian mainstay of the Party, both as regards quantity and its real effect on the whole policy of the Party. In the course of the coming year, it is necessary to have an intensified recruitment of party members from among the workers at the bench, in order to draw into the ranks of the R.C.P. from the genuine proletarian elements not less than 100,000 new members. For this purpose, workers must be afforded every facility for entering the Party. At the same time, during the recruiting campaign, entry into the Party must be entirely closed to all non-proletarian elements. Within the Party systematic propaganda must be conducted to orient the whole Party to its fundamental workers' mainstay.

2. In order to strengthen the connection of the Party with the non-party masses, it is necessary to ensure that, in all Soviets and in all Soviet organs, non-party workers be granted a sufficiently adequate representation, not in words, but in fact. The Central Committee of the Party must exercise a strict supervision of the realization of this decision and sharply call to order all those local organizations which violate it.

3. The Party organizations must carry out a particularly careful work of enlightenment amongst those nuclei which, during the past discussion, were wavering, to a greater or lesser extent, regarding the question of the party line. Enlightenment, enlightenment and still again enlightenment—this is the main task which, before all, lies on the shoulders of the fundamental mainstays of the Party.

4. Special attention must be devoted to the work of enlightenment among the youth. When material means are inadequate, the Party must prefer to have a smaller contingent of students, but to make up for this the material situation of the students must be improved and the qualitative side of the work in the high schools must be raised to a higher level. It is necessary to adopt special measures for securing the appropriateness of the party leadership of the work among the youth. The Party cannot permit the youth to be flattered, but neither must it tolerate the system of intimidation and bureaucratic tutelage. Only a persevering enlightenment on the fundamentals of Leninism can achieve this aim.

5. One of the most important tasks consists in raising to its proper level the study of the history of the R.C.P., primarily the fundamental facts of the struggle of Bolshevism against Menshevism, and of the role of the single factions and tendencies during this struggle, in particular of those eclectic factions which sought to "reconcile" Bolshevism with Menshevism. The C.C. of the Party must adopt a number of measures in order to raise to the proper level the publication of suitable manuals on the history of the R.C.P. and also to render the teaching of party history obligatory in all party schools, high schools, circles and the like.

6. Following the example of the strongest proletarian organizations, it is necessary to establish circles for the study of Leninism in all our organizations, using as a foundation, in the first place, the complete works of Comrade Lenin and securing a reliable leadership of these circles.

7. It is necessary to strengthen the central organ of the Party (*Pravda*) with reliable forces, in order to impart to it the possibility for a systematic enlightening regarding the fundamentals of Bolshevism and for carrying on a campaign against all deviations from it.

8. The present discussion must from now on be transferred from the pages of the *Pravda* to the pages of a special "Discussion Supplement" of the *Pravda*.

9. Liberty of discussion within the Party by no means signifies the liberty to undermine Party discipline. The Central Committee of the Party, and all the party centers of the provinces, must immediately adopt the strictest measures for preserving an iron Bolshevik discipline everywhere where any attempt is made to shake it.

10. To counteract the spreading of unfounded rumors, of documents which are forbidden and analogous actions, which are a favorite method of groups possessing no principles and infected with petty bourgeois moods, resolute measures must be adopted right up to expulsion from the Party.

11. An improvement in regard to information on the activity of the Central Committee and of the inner party life in general is indispensable. For this purpose, stenographic reports of the sessions of the Plenums of the C.C. must be sent to all members and to all substitute members of the C.C. and the C.C.C. In *Pravda*, in *Isvestiia of the C.C.* and in other newspapers in the center and in the provinces, there must be arranged on a large scale a section regarding party life. In the C.C. of the Party, a special section for information must be created.

12. Special attention must be given to an appropriate and sound management of party work in the Army. Any attempt to conduct factional "work" in the ranks of the Red Army must be punished by the Party in a particularly severe manner.

13. The Conference considers it fully appropriate to identify itself entirely and without reservation with the decision of the 10th Congress of the R.C.P., which forbids factional groupings. The Conference considers it necessary to propose to the 13th Congress of the RCP, that it confirm this decision in the name of the highest organ of the Party.

14. The Conference proposes to the C.C. that it publish the hitherto unpublished clause 7 of the resolution on unity, adopted according to the proposal of Comrade Lenin by the 10th Congress of the R.C.P., which empowers a joint sitting of the C.C. and the C.C.C. to transfer two thirds of the votes from members to substitute members or even to expel from the Party any member of the C.C. in the case of violation of party discipline or of "committing factionalism."

15. The Conference cannot neglect the decision of the last Moscow Provincial Conference, which notified the whole Party that at Moscow a faction-grouping formed itself, undermining the unity of the Party. The Conference is of opinion that the C.C. of the Party and the C.C.C. must immediately adopt the most decisive measures, right up to expulsion from the Party, against those who, in the main political center of the Soviet Union, try to introduce a schism into the ranks of the Party.

Declaring the discussion hitherto conducted concerning the questions in dispute as closed for the whole country, the Conference calls upon party organizations to proceed to active work. The fundamental premise for further success of the proletarian revolution is the unshakable unity of the R.C.P.—of the ruling Party of the proletarian dictatorship. The unit of the Party appears as the main achievement of the proletarian vanguard. The R.C.P. must preserve its unity as the apple of its eye. The Soviet Union Conference is convinced that the C.C. of the Party around which, as the result of the discussion has shown, the whole Party is again rallying, will firmly maintain this unity.

*International Press Correspondence*, IV, no. 20 (14 March 1924): 167-169.



## "FAREWELL, ILYICH"—THE PARTY LEADERS EULOGIZE LENIN

26 January 1924

*Lenin's death the evening of 21 January 1924, although hardly unexpected after his long illness, left the Party without its founder and guiding light. Whatever Lenin's popularity among the general population (of which the evidence is contradictory), there is no doubt of the extent to which he was revered among party members. Indeed, the cult of Lenin was already well underway. After Lenin's death was announced on 22 January several days of tributes and ceremonies began leading up to the actual funeral on 27 January. Given below are three examples, by Stalin, Trotsky and Zinoviev. Stalin's is especially notable for the repetitive but effective evocation of "Departing from us, Comrade Lenin enjoined us to...." followed by the pledge to fulfill Lenin's supposed wishes. The session of the Second All-Union Congress of Soviets on 26 January was devoted to memorializing Lenin; Stalin and Zinoviev's speeches were delivered there. Trotsky had gone to the Caucasus for his health and did not return in time for the funeral. These and other speeches and articles also marked a further step in the process of the virtual deification of Lenin.*

### I

V.I. Stalin

#### *"On the Death of Lenin"*

Comrades, we Communists are people of a special mould. We are made of a special stuff. We are those who form the army of the great proletarian strategist, the army of Comrade Lenin. There is nothing higher than the honour of belonging to this army. There is nothing higher than the title of member of the Party whose founder and leader was Comrade

Lenin. It is not given to everyone to be a member of such a party. It is not given to everyone to withstand the stresses and storms that accompany membership in such a party. It is the sons of the working class, the sons of want and struggle, the sons of incredible privation and heroic effort who before all should be members of such a party. That is why the Party of the Leninists, the Party of the Communists, is also called the Party of the working class.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO HOLD HIGH AND GUARD THE PURITY OF THE GREAT TITLE OF MEMBER OF THE PARTY. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT WE SHALL FULFIL YOUR BEHEST WITH HONOUR!

For twenty-five years Comrade Lenin tended our Party and made it into the strongest and most highly steeled workers' party in the world. The blows of tsarism and its henchmen, the fury of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, the armed attacks of Kolchak and Denikin, the armed intervention of Britain and France, the lies and slanders of the hundred-mouthed bourgeois press—all these scorpions constantly chastised our Party for a quarter of a century. But our Party stood firm as a rock, repelling the countless blows of its enemies and leading the working class forward, to victory. In fierce battles our Party forged the unity and solidarity of its ranks. And by unity and solidarity it achieved victory over the enemies of the working class.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO GUARD THE UNITY OF OUR PARTY AS THE APPLE OF OUR EYE. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT THIS BEHEST, TOO, WE SHALL FULFIL WITH HONOUR!

Burdensome and intolerable has been the lot of the working class. Painful and grievous have been the sufferings of the labouring people. Slaves and slaveholders, serfs and serf-owners, peasants and landlords, workers and capitalists, oppressed and oppressors—so the work has been built from time immemorial, and so it remains to this day in the vast majority of countries. Scores and indeed hundreds of times in the course of the centuries the labouring people have striven to throw off the oppressors from their backs and to become the masters of their own destiny. But each time, defeated and disgraced, they have been forced to retreat, harbouring in their breasts resentment and humiliation, anger and despair, and lifting up their eyes to an inscrutable heaven where they hoped to find deliverance. The chains of slavery remained intact, or the old chains were replaced by new ones, equally burdensome and degrading. Ours is the only country where the oppressed and downtrodden labouring masses have succeeded in throwing off the rule of the landlords and capitalists and replacing it by the rule of the workers and peasants. You know, comrades, and the whole world now admits it, that this gigantic struggle was led by Comrade Lenin and his Party. The greatness of Lenin lies above all in this, that by creating the Republic of Soviets he gave a practical demonstration to the oppressed masses of the whole world that hope of deliverance is not lost, that the rule of the landlords and capitalists is short-lived, that the kingdom of labour *can* be created by the efforts of the labouring people themselves, and that the kingdom of labour must be created not in heaven, but on *earth*. He thus fired the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world with the hope of liberation. That explains why Lenin's name has become the name most beloved of the labouring and exploited masses.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO GUARD AND STRENGTHEN THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT WE SHALL SPARE NO EFFORT TO FULFIL THIS BEHEST, TOO, WITH HONOUR!



The dictatorship of the proletariat was established in our country on the basis of an alliance between the workers and peasants. This is the first and fundamental basis of the Republic of Soviets. The workers and peasants could not have vanquished the capitalists and landlords without such an alliance. The workers could not have defeated the capitalists without the support of the peasants. The peasants could not have defeated the landlords without the leadership of the workers. This is borne out by the whole history of the Civil War in our country. But the struggle to consolidate the Republic of Soviets is by no means at an end—it has only taken on a new form. Before, the alliance of the workers and peasants took the form of a military alliance, because it was directed against Kolchak and Denikin. Now, the alliance of the workers and peasants, because it is directed against the merchant and the kulak, and its aim is the mutual supply by peasants and workers of all they require. You know that nobody worked for this more persistently than Comrade Lenin.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO STRENGTHEN WITH ALL OUR MIGHT THE ALLIANCE OF THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT THIS BEHEST, TOO, WE SHALL FULFIL WITH HONOUR!

The second basis of the Republic of Soviets is the union of the working people of the different nationalities of our country. Russians and Ukrainians, Bashkirs and Byelorussians, Georgians and Azerbaijanians, Armenians and Deghestanians, Tatars and Kirghiz, Uzbeks and Turkmenians are all equally interested in strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat. Not only does the dictatorship of the proletariat deliver these peoples from fetter and oppression, but these peoples on their part deliver our Republic of Soviets from the intrigues and assaults of the enemies of the working class by their supreme devotion to the Republic of Soviets and their readiness to make sacrifices for it. That is why Comrade Lenin untiringly urged upon us the necessity of the voluntary union of the peoples of our country, the necessity of their fraternal co-operation within the framework of the Union of Republics.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO STRENGTHEN AND EXTEND THE UNION OF REPUBLICS. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT THIS BEHEST, TOO, WE SHALL FULFIL WITH HONOUR!

The third basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat is our Red Army and our Red Navy. More than once did Lenin impress upon us that the respite we had won from the capitalist states might prove a short one. More than once did Lenin point out to us that the strengthening of the Red Army and the improvement of its condition is one of the most important tasks of our Party. The events connected with Curzon's ultimatum and the crisis in Germany once more confirmed that, as always, Lenin was right. Let us vow then, comrades, that we shall spare no effort to strengthen our Red Army and our Red Navy.

Like a hugh rock, our country stands out amid an ocean of bourgeois states. Wave after wave dashes against it, threatening to submerge it and wash it away. But the rock stands unshakable. Wherein lies its strength? Not only in the fact that our country rests on an alliance of the workers and peasants, that it embodies a union of free nationalities, that it is protected by the mighty arm of the Red Army and the Red Navy. The strength, the firmness, the solidity of our country is due to the profound sympathy and unfailing support it finds in the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world. The workers and peasants of the whole world want to preserve the Republic of Soviets as an arrow shot by the sure hand of Comrade Lenin into the camp of the enemy, as the pillar of their hopes of deliverance from oppression and exploitation, as a reliable beacon pointing the path to their emancipation. They want to preserve it, and they will not allow the landlords and capitalists

to destroy it. Therein lies our strength. Therein lies the strength of the working people of all countries. And therein lies the weakness of the bourgeoisie all over the world.

Lenin never regarded the Republic of Soviets as an end in itself. He always looked on it as an essential link for strengthening the revolutionary movement in the countries of the West and the East, an essential link for facilitating the victory of the working people of the whole world over capitalism. Lenin knew that this was the only right conception, both from the international standpoint and from the standpoint of preserving the Republic of Soviets itself. Lenin knew that this alone could fire the hearts of the working people of the whole world with determination to fight the decisive battles for their emancipation. That is why, on the very morrow of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, he, the greatest of the geniuses who have led the proletariat, laid the foundation of workers' International. That is why he never tired of extending and strengthening the union of the working people of the whole world—the Communist International.

You have seen during the past few days the pilgrimage of scores and hundreds of thousands of working people to Comrade Lenin's bier. Before long you will see the pilgrimage of representatives of millions of working people to Comrade Lenin's tomb. You need not doubt that the representatives of millions will be followed by representatives of scores and hundreds of millions from all parts of the earth, who will come to testify that Lenin was the leader not only of the Russian proletariat, not only of the European workers, not only of the colonial East, but of all the working people of the globe.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT WE SHALL NOT SPARE OUR LIVES TO STRENGTHEN AND EXTEND THE UNION OF THE WORKING PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD—THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL!

## II

L. Trotsky

*"Farewell, Ilyich! Farewell!"*

"Lenin is no more." These words crash upon our intelligence like a gigantic rock falling into the sea. How can we believe it, how can we admit it? The mind of the workers of the whole world will refuse to accept this fact, for their enemies are powerful and dangerous, the road before them long and painful, the task they have undertaken immense—the greatest that history has ever known, and not yet completed. Lenin is necessary to the working classes of the world as perhaps never in the history of humanity has a man been necessary.

The second phase of his illness, more serious than the first, had lasted for ten months. In the bitter expression of the doctors, the organs of circulation were 'playing' all the time. It was a terrible game, with the life of Ilyich as plaything. We had a reason to expect an improvement, and even complete restoration, as much as we could a catastrophe. All of us were expecting recovery, but it was the catastrophe which supervened. The nerve centres controlling his respiration refused to serve any longer, and extinguished the flame of that titanic thought.

And now Ilyich is no more. The Party is an orphan. The working class is an orphan. That is what one feels before everything else, on learning of the death of him who was our teacher and our guide. How shall we go forward along our path, comrades? Shall we not wander now the Lenin is no longer with us? No. Leninism remains. Lenin is immortal in his doctrine, his work, his method, his example, which live in us, which live in the Party he created, and in the first workers' state of which he was the head and the helmsman.

Our grief is as immense as our loss; but let us render thanks to history for allowing us to be born as contemporaries of Lenin, and permitting us to work by his side and be his disciples. Our Party is Leninism in action; our Party is the collective guide of the workers: every one of us contains something in him of Lenin. How shall we march forward in our Party? With the light of Leninism in our hand. Shall we find the true road? By collective thought and the collective will we shall find it.

To-morrow, the day after to-morrow, next week, in a month's time, we shall still be saying to ourselves that it is impossible that Lenin is no more. Yes, his death will for long still seem to us unbelievable, inadmissible, monstrous, arbitrary, unnatural. Let the wound which opens in the heart of every one of us, at the memory of the great man who has disappeared, recall constantly to us that our responsibility has been doubled: let us be worthy of him who taught us. In our mourning let us close our ranks and hearts for new combats. Comrades, brothers, Lenin is no longer with us. Farewell, Ilyich. Farewell, leader.

### III

G. Zinoviev

#### *"The Death of Lenin and Problems of Leninism"*

Could anyone imagine the man, who, having once heard Lenin, could ever forget him? And his eloquent speech has been heard by hundreds of thousands, nay millions of people. To those whose good fortune it was to have heard Lenin, it seemed as though he had transferred part of himself. No matter where those hundreds of thousands, those millions of people may be, no matter how scattered they may be over the face of the earth, most of them will remember Lenin today with a feeling of thankfulness; for no other man ever struck with such unheard of power the hearts of those who struggle for a better future for humanity.

All over the world and in every language that is spoken, millions and millions of people repeat that name—LENIN. Everyone who ever knew Lenin is today filled with a feeling of personal thankfulness for the one who lifted the ideal of the working class to such heights, who made humanity a head higher. With still greater power does this sentiment spring up in all of us, members of that party which the genius of Lenin created, in those pupils of Vladimir Ilyich, who, in the course of twenty years or more, worked side by side with him, together with him experiencing the bitterness of defeat and the joy of victory; learning from him and knowing him not only as the great leader, but also as the man and teacher.

On the 14th of March, 1883, on the day of the death of Marx, Engels wrote to Marx's old friend, Zarge:

"All phenomena, even the most dreadful ones, take place according to the laws of nature and are not without consolation, as in the present case. The art of healing might have succeeded perhaps, in prolonging by a few years a vegetating existence, a life of helplessness, it would have meant glory to the medical profession, but would have been of no benefit to a slowly dying being. Such a life would have been unbearable to Marx. To live while having a pile of unfinished works before him, to experience the miseries of a Tantalus at the thought of being unable to finish them—this would have been a thousand times harder than a peaceful death. In my opinion there was not other way out after what he had gone through; this I know better than all doctors."

Today, when the report of the autopsy on the body of Lenin lies before us, we must unfortunately repeat those words of Engels, applying them to Vladimir Ilyich. Arterial sclerosis, resulting from superhuman strain and unusually hard brain work, made Vladimir Ilyich's condition hopeless even before the last attack which overcame him and ended in catastrophe.

Lenin deprived of the possibility of speaking, of writing, of leading people in the struggle, of working and again working—can anyone imagine a greater torment for that rebel of rebels and thinker of thinkers?

But let everyone brace himself up. Let everyone shut up within himself those emotions which the death of Lenin calls forth within us. Let us try now, with the coolness and calmness with which Vladimir Ilyich taught us, to the account of the problems facing us after his death. Up to the last moment all of us, the whole Party, never lost faith that Lenin would return to work, we thought the miracle would happen, for Lenin had tens and hundreds of times accomplished that which seemed impossible. But no all is finished. The Party will have to work without Lenin.

“The proletarian movement will go ahead on its road, but no more will there be the centre to which the French, Russians, Americans and Germans would come speeding for help in critical moments, always receiving from him clear and faithful counsel. Such counsel as only a genius, a master of his subject could give.”

Thus wrote Engels on the day of the death of Marx. This feeling of orphanhood all of us are experiencing today.

The tasks which stood before Marxists in 1883, after the death of Marx, were hard and complicated. But how much harder and more complicated are the problems confronting us, Marxian-Leninists in 1924, now that Comrade Lenin has left us?

The problems confronting Marxists after the death of Marx were mostly theoretical. The international working class was going through a critical period. The First International was in ruins and the Second International had not yet succeeded in establishing itself. The labour movement in France—and not in France alone—had not yet recovered from the break-up of the Paris Commune in 1871. The international revolutionary labour movement had not yet come out on the open road. The main problem was: how to make the great theoretical inheritance left by Marx the property of the broad masses of the labour movement.

The problems confronting the Marxist-Leninists are a great deal more complicated and serious. The international proletarian revolution has begun, and has attained its first victories in one of the biggest countries in the world. At the same time the difficulties of the great struggle for the realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat on an international scale are yet ahead of us.

The Second International is still poisoning the labour movement with its nostrums. The problems of the Communist International, Lenin's International, are becoming more complicated every day. The road is becoming more difficult and tortuous. The international proletariat on its way to victory will many a time yet, in single detachments, get off the track and in searching for new roads shed its blood without attaining victory.

Shattered in the first imperialist war, scattered and deceived by false leaders of the Second International, the international proletariat has not yet freed itself from its somnambulist stumblings. Before the Marxist-Leninists, who have to lead the international labour movement without our incomparable leader, lies a tremendous amount of hard work of not only theoretical, but of a practical political character. The first task confronting the Leninists in Russia in the absence of Lenin, is that of strengthening the basic idea of Leninism—the union between the working class and the peasants. This, before anything else, is the radical, the basic problem before the Russian Communist Party after the death of Lenin. By our deeds we must attain that which will enable the peasants to understand *that although Lenin is dead, the Leninist Party will, on the basic question which is to determine the fate of the whole Russian Revolution, with still greater energy carry on its former policy.*

Let us attain the point where within the shortest time possible, there will not be a single man among the most active strata of the peasantry who will not understand that the Bolshevik Party will carry on with yet greater force its former policy of solidifying the bond between the working class and the peasantry.

The second task facing the Russian Communist Party is the further strengthening of the union between the Party and the labouring masses. The death of Lenin has been a hard blow, not only for the Communist worker, but also for the non-party worker. In order to fulfill the wishes of Vladimir Ilyich we have to work so that within a short time the millions and millions of non-party workers of Russia will understand that although Lenin died, *the Party created by him will not squander the inheritance left by him, but on the contrary will strengthen and solidify the union between the most advanced Communists and the whole of the non-party working masses.* It will succeed with the plough of Leninism in raising new and deeper layers; it will succeed in uplifting the non-party masses; it will do its utmost in assisting even those who have only a spark of talent; it will succeed in helping the multi-million working mass in educating itself and in raising its cultural level, in order to fit it for the work of socialist reconstruction.

The third task confronting the Leninists is to preserve, under all circumstances, *the unity of the Party created by Vladimir Ilyich.* The greatest thing created by the genius of Lenin is the Russian Communist Party, nursed by him, loved by him. He gave the Party the best that was in him, and welded it with the blood of his heart. Lenin thought of our Party as of one great whole, as of an organisation moulded into one solid piece that can combine in one unit *all that is best in the working class.* In this respect the inheritance left by Lenin is even more valuable than that which the Marxists inherited after the death of Marx.

The Russian Communist Party was and must remain the vanguard of the working class, its head, its collective leader. In order to perform this task the Party must remain united. Harsher than ever before will the Party counteract any attempt to break up its ranks.

Our fourth task is to remain a party of *militant* Bolshevism. Throughout the difficulties of the transitory period, while in the process of surrounding the bourgeoisie enemy, we may sometimes find it advantageous to retreat a little—only afterwards to attack with greater force—yet our Party created by Lenin shall always remain a Party of *militant* Bolshevism. Therefore we must not lose sight of the dangers connected with the period of the New Economic Policy; we must keep our eyes open to the existing dangers of its degenerating influences; we must fight mercilessly against any attempt at misinterpretation of Leninism and against the reappearance of petty-bourgeois views from wherever they may come.

We still remember the first days at Smolny after the October Revolution. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers from the trenches, peasants in soldiers' uniforms, anxious, moving like an avalanche towards Smolny to take a glance at Lenin, to exchange a few words with him and to ask him what is going to be the fate of Russia, of all of us, in the days to come. Thousands upon thousands of such peasant soldiers would look searchingly into the eyes of Lenin, and with the keenness of true representatives of the people saw in him the new leader of Russia. Others would quietly study him, as if asking, "Who are you? Will you be capable of leading us to victory, to a new life?" And now that merciless death has mowed down this giant, the workers and peasants of Russia are turning the same searching gaze towards the whole Party created by Lenin. The workers and peasants are asking our Party, "Will you lead us to victory now that Lenin is dead?" Let us so work that we may be justified in answering, *We shall lead you!*

The Party founded by Lenin *shall* prove to be great and strong enough to reach the height which the demands of our great historical epoch place before us.

The Russian Leninists, the Leninists of the Communist International and of the whole world are confronted by grand and important tasks. But we have inherited from our deceased leader the Union of Socialist Republics and the Communist International together with its vanguard the Russian Communist Party.

With the knowledge of the seriousness of the problems facing us, which from now on we shall have to face and settle by our own collective effort, without the sage advice of Vladimir Ilyich, we must under all circumstances solidify our ranks into a still closer union.

The death of Comrade Lenin will be the signal for the brotherly union of all those who really deserve the name of Leninists. We shall strive to so work that, to a small extent at least, we may collectively take the place of Lenin.

Let us carry into the great task bequeathed to us by Lenin, his devotion, his care, his calmness, his love for the work and so far as we can, his wonderful foresight.

Stalin, *Works*, VI: 46-53, *Communist International*, 30 (1924): 4-10 (Trotsky and Zinoviev).



## THE CONSTITUTION OF THE U.S.S.R.

31 January 1924

*The end of the Civil War saw the establishment of several nominally independent states, each under the control of the Communist Party. This anomalous situation was resolved first in practice by Moscow's de facto domination through the Communist Party and then in law by the creation of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. The initial steps in creating the U.S.S.R. was the "Declaration and Treaty of Union" of 30 December 1920 (see volume two of Documents of Soviet History). These were expanded to form the Constitution approved by the Central Executive Committee in July 1923, which was adopted formally in January 1924 at the Second Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R., with minor amendments. Both 1923 and 1924 are sometimes used as the date of the Constitution and the formal foundation of the U.S.S.R. The Constitution set the basic political structure of the Soviet system, including the two house structure, the Council of People's Commissars (later Council of Ministers), the system of union-wide and republic commissariats (ministries), and others. This basic system survived the Constitution itself, which was replaced by the "Stalin Constitution" in 1936. Of particular note, especially in light of events of the early 1990s, are those provisions which insisted that this was a voluntary union and provided for the right of secession. More in keeping with the expectations of the time were provisions for the addition of new republics to the union. While autonomy for nationalities was carefully woven into the Constitution, the unitary Communist Party and the strong hand of a highly centralized government in Moscow provided a solid counterweight to any centrifugal forces. The Declaration and Treaty of Union together comprise the Constitution.*

## CONSTITUTION OF THE UNION OF SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS

### PART I

#### DECLARATION

Since the foundation of the Soviet Republics, the states of the world have been divided into two camps: the camp of capitalism and the camp of socialism.

There, in the camp of capitalism: national hate and inequality, colonial slavery and chauvinism, national oppression and massacres, brutalities and imperialistic wars.

Here, in the camp of socialism: reciprocal confidence and peace, national liberty and equality, the pacific co-existence and fraternal collaboration of peoples.

The attempts made by the capitalistic world during the past ten years to decide the question of nationalities by bringing together the principle of the free development of

peoples with a system of exploitation of man by man have been fruitless. In addition, the number of national conflicts becomes more and more confusing, even menacing the capitalist regime. The bourgeoisie has proven itself incapable of realizing a harmonious collaboration of the peoples.

It is only in the camp of the Soviets, only under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat that has grouped around itself the majority of the people, that it has been possible to eliminate the oppression of nationalities, to create an atmosphere of mutual confidence and to establish the basis of a fraternal collaboration of peoples.

It is only thanks to these circumstances that the Soviet Republics have succeeded in repulsing the imperialist attacks both internally and externally; it is only thanks to them that the Soviet Republics have succeeded in satisfactorily ending a civil war, in assuring their existence and in dedicating themselves to pacific economic reconstruction.

But the years of the war have not passed without leaving their trace. The devastated fields, the closed factories, the forces of production destroyed and the economic resources exhausted, this heritage of the war renders insufficient the isolated economic efforts of the several Republics. National economic reestablishment is impossible as long as the Republics remain separated.

On the other hand, the instability of the international situation and the danger of new attacks make inevitable the creation of a united front of the Soviet Republics in the presence of capitalist surroundings.

Finally, the very structure of Soviet power, international by nature of class, pushes the masses of workers of the Soviet Republics to unite in one socialist family.

All these considerations insistently demand the union of the Soviet Republics into one federated state capable of guaranteeing external security, economic prosperity internally, and the free national development of peoples.

The will of the peoples of the Soviet Republics recently assembled in Congress, where they decided unanimously to form the "Union of Socialist Soviet Republics," is a sure guarantee that this Union is a free federation of peoples equal in rights, that the right to freely withdraw from the Union is assured to each Republic, that access to the Union is open to all Republics already existing as well as those that may be born in the future, that the new federal state will be the worthy crowning of the principles laid down as early as October 1917 of the pacific co-existence and fraternal collaboration of peoples, that it will serve as a bulwark against the capitalist world and mark a new decisive step towards the union of workers of all countries in one world-wide Socialist Soviet Republic.

## **PART II**

### **TREATY**

The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, the Socialist Soviet Republic of Ukraine, the Socialist Soviet Republic of White Russia, and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Transcaucasia (including the Socialist Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan, the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia, and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia)—unite themselves in one federal state—"The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics." [amended in 1925 to include the Socialist Soviet Republic of Turkmenia and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan—ed.]

## **Chapter I**

### **Attributions of the Supreme Organs of Power of the Union**

**ARTICLE 1.** The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics through its supreme organs has the following powers:

(a) To represent the Union in its international relations; to conclude all diplomatic relations; to conclude treaties, political and otherwise, with other States;

- (b) to modify the exterior frontiers of the Union, as well as to regulate questions concerning the modification of frontiers between the member Republics;
  - (c) to conclude treaties concerning the reception of new Republics into the Union;
  - (d) to declare war and to conclude peace;
  - (e) to conclude internal and external loans of the Union and to authorize internal and external loans of the member Republics;
  - (f) to ratify international treaties;
  - (g) to direct commerce with foreign countries and to determine the system of internal commerce;
  - (h) to establish the basic principles and the general plan of the national economy of the Union; to define the domains of industry and industrial enterprises that are of federal interest; to conclude treaties of concession both federal and in the name of the member Republics;
  - (i) to direct transportation and the postal and telegraph services;
  - (j) to organize and direct the armed forces of the Union;
  - (k) to approve the budget of the federal state which includes the budgets of the member Republics; to establish duties and federal revenues, making additions and reductions in order to balance the member Republics' budgets; to authorize duties and supplementary taxes to meet the member Republics' budgets;
  - (l) to establish a uniform system of money and credit;
  - (m) to establish general principles of exploitation and use of the earth, as well as those of the sub-soil, the forests, and the waters of the territories of the Union;
  - (n) to establish federal legislation on the emigration from the territory of one of the Republics to the territory of another and to set up a fund for such emigration;
  - (o) to establish principles of the judicial organization and procedure, as well as civil and criminal legislation for the Union;
  - (p) to establish the fundamental laws regarding work;
  - (q) to establish the general principles regarding public instruction;
  - (r) to establish the general measures regarding public hygiene;
  - (s) to establish a standard system of weights and measures;
  - (t) to organize federal statistics;
  - (u) to fix the fundamental legislation regarding federal nationality, with reference to the rights of foreigners;
  - (v) to exercise the right of amnesty in all territories of the Union;
  - (w) to abrogate the acts of the Congresses of the Soviets and the Central Executive Committees of the member Republics contrary to the present Constitution;
  - (x) to arbitrate litigious questions between the member Republics.
- ARTICLE 2. The approval and modification of the fundamental principles of the present Constitution belong exclusively to the Congress of Soviets of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

## CHAPTER II

### Sovereign Rights of the Member Republics

ARTICLE 3. The sovereignty of the member Republics is limited only in the matters indicated in the present Constitution, as coming within the competence of the Union. Outside of those limits, each member Republic exerts its public powers independently; the U.S.S.R. protects the rights of the member Republics.

ARTICLE 4. Each one of the member Republics retains the right to freely withdraw from the Union.

ARTICLE 5. The member Republics will make changes in their Constitutions to conform with the present Constitution.



ARTICLE 6. The territory of the member Republics cannot be modified without their consent; also, any limitation or modification or suppression of Article 4 must have the approval of all the member Republics of the Union.

ARTICLE 7. Just one federal nationality is established for the citizens of the member Republics.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **Congress of Soviets of the Union**

ARTICLE 8. The supreme organ of power of the U.S.S.R. is the Congress of Soviets, and, in the recesses of the Congress of Soviets—the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. which is composed of the Federal Soviet and the Soviet of Nationalities.

ARTICLE 9. The Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. is composed of representatives of the city and town Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 25,000 electors, and of representatives of the provincial Congresses of Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 125,000 inhabitants.

ARTICLE 10. The delegates to the Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. are elected in the provincial Congresses of Soviets. In the Republics where there does not exist provincial division, the delegates are elected directly to the Congress of Soviets of the respective Republic.

ARTICLE 11. Regular sessions of the Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. are convoked by the Central Executive Committee of the Union once yearly; extraordinary sessions may be convoked on decision of the C.E.C. (Central Executive Committee), or on the demand of the Federal Soviet, or of the Soviet of Nationalities, or on the demand of two member Republics.

ARTICLE 12. In cases where extraordinary circumstances interfere with the meeting of the Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. on the date set, the C.E.C. of the Union has the power to adjourn the meeting of Congress.

### **CHAPTER IV**

#### **The Central Executive Committee of the Union**

ARTICLE 13. The Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. is composed of the Federal Soviet and the Soviet of Nationalities.

ARTICLE 14. The Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. elects the Federal Soviet from among the representatives of the member Republics in proportion to the population of each one to make a grand total of 371 members.

ARTICLE 15. The Soviet of Nationalities is composed of representatives of the member Republics and associated autonomous Republics of the R.S.F.S.R. on the basis of five representatives for each member Republic, and one representative for each associated autonomous Republic. The composition of the Soviet of Nationalities in its entirety is approved by the Congress of the U.S.S.R.

(The autonomous Republics of Adjara, and Abkhazia and the autonomous region of Osetia, Nagorny-Karabakh and Nakhichevanskaia each send a representative to the Soviet of Nationalities.)

ARTICLE 16. The Federal Soviet and the Soviet of Nationalities examine all decrees, codes, and acts that are presented to them by the Presidium of the C.E.C. and by the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., by the different Commissariats of the People of the Union, by the C.E.C. of the member Republics, as well as those that owe their origin to the Federal Soviet and the Soviet of Nationalities.

ARTICLE 17. The C.E.C. of the Union publishes the codes, decrees, acts, and ordinances; orders the work of legislation and administration of the U.S.S.R., and defines the sphere of activity of the Presidium of the C.E.C. and of the Council of Commissars of the People of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 18. All decrees and acts defining the general rules of the political and economic life of the U.S.S.R., or making radical modifications in the existing practices of public organs of the U.S.S.R. must obligatorily be submitted for examination and approval to the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 19. All decrees, acts, and ordinances promulgated by the C.E.C. must be immediately put into force throughout all the territory of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 20. The C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. has the right to suspend or abrogate the decrees, acts, and orders of the Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R., as well as those of the Congress of Soviets and of the C.E.C. of the member Republics, and all other organs of power throughout the territory of the Union U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 21. The ordinary sessions of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. are convoked by the Presidium of the C.E.C. three times yearly. The extraordinary sessions are convoked by the Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. on the demand of the Presidium of the Federal Soviet or of the Presidium of the Soviet of Nationalities, and also on demand of one of the C.E.Cs. of the member Republics.

ARTICLE 22. The projects of law submitted for examination to the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. do not have the force of law until adopted by the Federal Soviet and by the Soviet of Nationalities; they are published in the name of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 23. In case of disagreement between the Federal Soviet and the Soviet of Nationalities, the question is transmitted to a compromise committee chosen by the two of them.

ARTICLE 24. If an accord is not reached by the compromise committee, the question is transferred for examination to a joint meeting of the Federal Soviet and the Soviet of Nationalities; and, if neither the Federal Soviet nor the Soviet of Nationalities obtain a majority, then the question may be submitted, on the demand of one of these organs, to the decision of an ordinary or extraordinary Congress of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 25. The Federal Soviet and the Soviet of Nationalities elect for the preparation of their sessions and the direction of their work—their Presidiums, composed of seven members each.

ARTICLE 26. Between sessions of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R., the supreme organ of power is the Presidium of the U.S.S.R., constituted by the C.E.C. to the extent of 21 members, including the Presidium of the Federal Soviet and the Presidium of the Soviet of Nationalities.

To form the Presidium of the C.E.C. and the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., conforming to Articles 26 and 37 of the of the present Constitution, joint sessions of the Federal Soviet and of the Soviet of Nationalities are convoked. In the joint session of the Federal Soviet and the Soviet of Nationalities, the vote is taken separately within each group.

ARTICLE 27. The C.E.C. elects, in accordance with the number of member Republics, four Presidents of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. from among the members of the Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 28. The C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. is responsible before the Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R.

## CHAPTER V

### The Presidium of the C.E.C. of the Union

ARTICLE 29. Between sessions of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R., the Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. is the supreme organ of legislative, executive, and administrative power of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 30. The Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. oversees the enforcement of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. and the execution of all decisions of the Congress of Soviets and of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. by all the public agents.

**ARTICLE 31.** The Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. has the right to suspend and abrogate the orders of the Council of People's Commissars and of the different Councils of the People of the U.S.S.R. as well as those of the C.E.C. and C.P.C. (Councils of People's Commissars) of the member Republics.

**ARTICLE 32.** The Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. has the right to suspend the acts of the Congresses of Soviets of the member Republics submitting afterwards these acts for the examination and approval of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R.

**ARTICLE 33.** The Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. promulgates the decrees, acts, and orders; examines and approves the projects of decrees and acts deposited by the C.P.C., by the different authorities of the U.S.S.R., by the C.E.C. of the member Republics, by their Presidiums and by other organs of power.

**ARTICLE 34.** The decrees and decisions of the C.E.C., of its Presidium, and the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R. are printed in the languages generally employed in the member Republics: Russian, Ukrainian, White Russian, Georgian, Armenian, Turko-Tartarian.

**ARTICLE 35.** The Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. decides questions regarding the relationships between the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R. and the People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., for one part and the C.E.C. of the member Republics and their Presidiums, for the second part.

**ARTICLE 36.** The Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. is responsible before the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **Council of People's Commissars of the Union**

**ARTICLE 37.** The Council of People's Commissars (C.P.C.) of the U.S.S.R. is the executive and administrative organ of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. and is constituted by the C.E.C. as follows:

- (a) The President of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R.,
- (b) The Vice-Presidents,
- (c) The People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs,
- (d) The People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs,
- (e) The People's Commissar for Foreign Commerce,
- (f) The People's Commissar for Ways and Communication,
- (g) The People's Commissar for Postal and Telegraph Service,
- (h) The People's Commissar for the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate,
- (i) The President of the Supreme Council of National Economy,
- (j) The People's Commissar for Labor,
- (k) The People's Commissar for Finances,
- (l) The People's Commissar for Supplies.

**ARTICLE 38.** The Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., in the limits of the power granted to it by the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. and on the basis of rules regulating the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R., publishes the decrees and decisions that must become effective throughout the territory of the U.S.S.R.

**ARTICLE 39.** The C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R. examines the decrees and decisions given it by the various People's Commissariats as well as those from the C.E.C. of the member Republics and by their Presidiums.

**ARTICLE 40.** The C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R. is responsible for all its work before the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. and before its Presidium.

**ARTICLE 41.** The orders and acts of the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R. may be suspended and abrogated by the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. and by its Presidium.

**ARTICLE 42.** The Central Executive Committees of the member Republics and their Presidiums may object to the decrees and orders of the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R. to the Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R., without suspending the execution of these orders.

**CHAPTER VII****The Supreme Court of the Union**

**ARTICLE 43.** In order to maintain revolutionary legality within the territory of the U.S.S.R., a Supreme Court under the jurisdiction of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. is established, competent:

(a) To give the Supreme Courts of the member Republics the authentic interpretations on questions of federal legislation;

(b) To examine, on the request of the Prosecutor of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., the decrees, decisions, and verdicts of the Supreme Courts of the member Republics, with the view of discovering any infraction of the federal laws, or harming the interests of other Republics, and if such be discovered to bring them before the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R.

(c) To render decisions on the request of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. as to the constitutionality of laws passed by the member Republics;

(d) To settle legal disputes between the member Republics;

(e) To examine the accusations brought before it of high officials against whom charges have been made relative to their performance of duties.

**ARTICLE 44.** The Supreme Court performs its functions in the following manner:

(a) With a full attendance of the member judges of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.;

(b) Or, in a meeting of the Civil Judiciary College and the Criminal Judiciary College of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.;

(c) Or, in a meeting of the Military College.

**ARTICLE 45.** The Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., in full session, is composed of 11 members, including its President and Vice-President, the four Presidents of the Supreme Courts of the member Republics, and a representative of the Unified States Political Administration of the U.S.S.R.; the President and the Vice-President and the other five members are named by the Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R.

**ARTICLE 46.** The Prosecutor of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. and his assistant are named by the Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. The Prosecutor of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. is charged with the duties: (1) to give the decisions of all questions in the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., (2) to prosecute the cases brought before the Court, (3) and, in cases of lack of agreement among the judges of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., to bring these questions of dispute before the Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R.

**ARTICLE 47.** The right to submit the questions referred to in Article 43 to the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. for examination belongs exclusively to the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R., to its Presidium, to the Prosecutor of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., to the Prosecutors of the Supreme Courts of the member Republics and to the Unified States Political Administration of the U.S.S.R.

**ARTICLE 48.** The regular sessions of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. constitute the special legal chambers to examine:

(a) The civil and criminal affairs of exceptional importance that are of interest to two or more member Republics;

(b) Personal charges against members of the C.E.C. and the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R.

A decision of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. to proceed to examine a case may take place only after special authority has been granted for each case by the C.E.C. of the Union or its Presidium.

**CHAPTER VIII****Commissars of the People of the Union**

**ARTICLE 49.** For the immediate direction of the several branches of public administration attributed to the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R., ten People's Commissars are created as

mentioned in Article 37 of the present Constitution and who act according to the regulations of the People's Commissars approved by the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 50. The People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. are divided into the following groups:

(a) People's Commissars handling strictly federal matters of the U.S.S.R. that are external in character;

(b) People's Commissars handling matters that are purely domestic in character.

ARTICLE 51. The first group of the Commissars handling matters external in character includes the following People's Commissars:

(a) For Foreign Affairs,

(b) For Military and Naval Affairs,

(c) For Foreign Commerce,

(d) For Ways and Communication,

(e) For Postal and Telegraph Service.

ARTICLE 52. The second group handling matters that are strictly domestic in character includes the following People's Commissars:

(a) The Council of National Economy,

(b) For Supplies,

(c) For Labor,

(d) For Finances,

(e) For the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate.

ARTICLE 53. The People's Commissars handling matters of purely external character have, in the various member Republics their delegates directly subordinate to these Commissars.

ARTICLE 54. The People's Commissars handling matters of domestic concern have, as executing organs in the various member Republics, People's Commissars of these Republics of similar title.

ARTICLE 55. The C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R., including the individual Commissars, are the heads of the various departments mentioned.

ARTICLE 56. Under each People's Commissar, and under his presidency, is formed a College, of which the members are named by the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 57. The People's Commissar has the right to personally take decisions on all questions that come within the jurisdiction of his department, on advising the College of his department of his act. In case of disagreement on any decision of the People's Commissar, the College, or its members separately, may bring the dispute before the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R., without suspending the act of the Commissar.

ARTICLE 58. The orders of the different People's Commissars of the Union may be abrogated by the Presidium of the C.E.C. and by the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 59. The orders of the People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. may be suspended by the C.E.C. or by the Presidium of the C.E.C.s of the member Republics in case of evident incompatibility of these orders with the Federal Constitution, with federal legislation or with legislation of the member Republic. This suspension is immediately communicated by the C.E.C. or by the Presidiums of the C.E.C.s of the member Republics to the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R. and to the proper People's Commissar of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 60. The People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. are responsible before the C.P.C., the C.E.C of the U.S.S.R., and its Presidium.

## CHAPTER XI

### The Unified Political Administration of State

ARTICLE 61. With the goal of unifying the revolutionary efforts of the member Republics in their struggle against political and economic counter-revolution, spying and

banditry, there shall be created under the jurisdiction of the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R., a Unified State Political Administration (O.G.P.U.) of which the President shall be a consulting member of the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE 62. The O.G.P.U. of the U.S.S.R. directs the activities of the local organs of O.G.P.U. through its delegates under the jurisdiction of the C.P.C. of the member Republics, acting in virtue of a special ruling sanctioned through legislative channels.

ARTICLE 63. The overseeing of acts of the O.G.P.U. as to their legality shall be in charge of the Prosecutor of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. by virtue of a special ruling of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R.

## CHAPTER X

### The Member Republics

ARTICLE 64. Within the limits of the territory of each member Republic the supreme organ of power is the Congress of Soviets of the Republic, and in Congressional recesses, its Central Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 65. The relations between the supreme organs of power of the member Republics and the supreme organs of power of the U.S.S.R. are established by the present Constitution.

ARTICLE 66. The C.E.C. of the member Republics elect from among their own membership the Presidiums that in the recesses between sessions of the C.E.C. are the supreme organs of power.

ARTICLE 67. The C.E.C. of the member Republics will form their executive organs, the Council of People's Commissars, as follows:

- (a) The President of the Council of People's Commissars,
- (b) The Vice-Presidents,
- (c) The President of the Supreme Council for National Economy,
- (d) The People's Commissar for Agriculture,
- (e) The People's Commissar for Finances,
- (f) The People's Commissar for Supplies,
- (g) The People's Commissar for Labor,
- (h) The People's Commissar for the Interior,
- (i) The People's Commissar for Justice,
- (j) The People's Commissar for the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate,
- (k) The People's Commissar for Public Instruction,
- (l) The People's Commissar for Public Health,

(m) The People's Commissar for Social Welfare, and in addition, and with a voice either consultative or deliberative, according to the decision of the C.E.C. of the member Republics, representatives from the People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. for Foreign Affairs, for Military and Naval Affairs, for Foreign Commerce, for Ways and Communication, for Postal and Telegraph Service.

ARTICLE 68. The Supreme Council of National Economy and the Commissars of Supplies, of Finances, of Labor, and the Inspectorate of Workers and Peasants of the member Republics, while being subordinate to the C.E.C. and C.P.C. of the member Republics, will execute the orders of the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R.

## CHAPTER XI

### Arms, Flag and Capital of the Union

ARTICLE 70. The insignia of the State of the U.S.S.R. is composed of a sickle and a hammer on an earthly globe, surrounded by sun rays and framed with wheat stalks, with an inscription in the six languages mentioned in Article 34: "Proletarians of all countries, unite!" Above the insignia, there shall be a five pointed star.

ARTICLE 71. The flag of the State of the U.S.S.R. shall be in red or vermillion cloth with the arms of the Union. [In 1925 amended to describe the flag as: To be red or vermillion cloth, rectangular in shape with the width half the length. In the upper left hand corner, a sickle and a hammer in gold, with a ray one-sixth the size of the width of the flag; above the sickle and hammer, a five pointed star surrounded by a border of gold; the diameter of the star is equal to one-tenth the width of the flag. Ed.]

ARTICLE 72. The Capital of the U.S.S.R. is Moscow.

Milton H. Andrew, *Twelve Leading Constitutions*: 227-45, with modifications.



# RESOLUTION OF THE CONGRESS OF SOVIETS ON DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION BY GREAT BRITAIN

2 February 1924

*Soviet Russia attempted repeatedly to obtain diplomatic recognition from the outside world, and especially from the victorious Western great powers. The election of a Labour Party government in Great Britain led finally to the first formal, de jure, diplomatic recognition of the new Soviet state by one of the Western great powers. Italy and France followed within the year, but the United States continued to refuse recognition (see 16 and 18 December 1923, above). The following is the resolution passed by the Second Congress of Soviets of the USSR in response to British recognition.*

## [RESOLUTION]

Having heard the communication concerning the full *de jure* recognition of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics by Great Britain and the establishment of full normal diplomatic relations between the two States, the Second Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics notes with satisfaction that this historic step was one of the first acts of the first Government of Great Britain chosen by the working class.

The workers' and peasants' government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which originated in the great Revolution made the struggle for peace its foremost object, and has throughout its existence persistently striven for the re-establishment of international relations between all peoples. Unfortunately no previous British Government went to meet the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and, on the contrary, as late as last May, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was confronted by British diplomacy with the fact of an ultimatum which threatened to interrupt trade relations which were commencing and was pregnant with direct peril to European peace.

The working class of Great Britain has been throughout this period the true ally of the working masses of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in their struggle for peace. The people of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics remember the efforts of the working masses of Great Britain and the advanced section of British public opinion for the ending of the boycott, the blockade, and armed intervention. They realized that the recognition which has resulted is the consequence of the unfaltering will of the British people which unanimously demanded the political recognition of the Soviet Government as a necessary condition for the establishment of universal peace, the economic reconstruction of the world after the ruin caused by the imperialistic war, and, in particular, for the successful fight against industrial stagnation and unemployment in Great Britain itself.

As a result of these united efforts of the pacific policy of the Soviet Government under the guidance of V. I. Lenin and the loudly expressed determination of the British people, there has resulted at last the establishment of normal relations between the two countries in a form worthy of both great peoples, and laying the foundations for their friendly cooperation.

In the tense atmosphere of international relations today fraught with the dangers of a new world conflict and justly constituting a subject for anxiety amongst the working people of all countries, this step of the British Labour Government acquires special and striking importance.

This Second Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics declares that cooperation between the peoples of Great Britain and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics remains as before one of the first cares of the Soviet Union Government which, in keeping with all its preceding policy of peace, will make every effort to settle all disputed questions and misunderstandings and to develop and consolidate economic relations which are so necessary for the economic and political progress of the people of both countries and of the whole world.

This Second Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics stretches out its hand with friendly fraternal greeting to the British people and empowers the Union Government to undertake the necessary proceedings with the British Government arising out of the fact of the recognition of the Soviet Government.

*The Times*, 4 February 1924.



#### RAKOVSKY'S SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE ANGLO-SOVIET CONFERENCE

14 April 1924

*Negotiations on trade and debt issues continued to dominate the discussions between the British and Soviets after recognition. The following speech by Christian Rakovsky, head of the Soviet delegation in London, outlined the Soviet position in the negotiations concerning Tsarist debts, issuance of credits, disarmament, and the disruptive question of propaganda. The statement was given in French and then published both in this English translation in The Times and in Russian in Izvestia.*

[Speech by Rakovsky]

Allow me to express, in the name of the Delegation of the Soviet Union, the sincere gratitude which we feel for the words of welcome, which you, Mr. Prime Minister, have just addressed to our Delegation on the occasion of the opening of this Conference. At the same time I desire to express our gratitude for the friendly welcome which has been extended to us from the moment of our arrival on British territory. I take advantage of this opportunity to reiterate the expressions of solidarity which have been made by the Congress of the Soviets of the Union to the British people in answer to the act of recognition of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics by the British Government.

I am aware of the considerable share which you personally, Mr. Prime Minister, as well as the party which you represent, have taken in this important step in the relations between the two countries, and you will permit me on behalf of the whole Delegation to express our sincere thanks.



The highest governing body of the nations constituting our Union has emphatically declared in its resolution that close cooperation with Great Britain is one of the foremost aims of the Soviet Government.

We join whole-heartedly in the hopes expressed by the Prime Minister on this opening of the proceedings of the present Anglo-Soviet Conference.

Taking into consideration the enormous political importance of the present conversations and the great interest with which they are followed by the working masses of the Union, our Government have sent to London a Delegation, which is not only furnished with very wide powers, but has also the full political authority to take on the spot all necessary decisions. The Delegation includes members of the Central Executive Committee and members of its Presidium, representatives of the chief Commissariats, the head of the State Bank, representatives of the various Republics, as well as representatives of all the most important branches of industry and the trade unions, in the person of the President of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions and the presidents or members of the various central committees of the trade unions.

On behalf of the whole Delegation, which follows in this the instructions of its Government, I declare that we are imbued with the most sincere desire to use all efforts in order to bring this Conference to a successful conclusion.

In the Note which, as representative of the Soviet Union, I had the honour to present to the British Government in reply to their Note on *de jure* recognition, my Government expressed its readiness to solve amicably all questions of an economic and political nature outstanding between the two countries and to re-examine all treaties which have been concluded in the past between Russia and Great Britain and which have not lost their force.

The object of the Conference will be to find ways and means to solve these questions. Today, at the opening of the Conference, I consider it my duty to indicate to you the general principles by which the Soviet Delegation will be guided in dealing with the problems before us. In spite of the complexity of these intricate problems, we consider that no insurmountable obstacle is standing in the way of a complete understanding between Great Britain and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Proceeding to the economic part of our programme, we consider the most important problem and the one to which all the other economic problems should be subordinated, to be that of a close collaboration between our two countries in the field of commerce, industry, and finance. The fundamental conditions for this collaboration are in existence; the economic structure of Great Britain and that of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are mutually complementary. On the one hand, a country possessing the most important industry, finance, and shipping in the world; on the other, a State with a population of 130 millions in possession of enormous potential riches, which requires for its development large quantities of industrial products and credits.

The war, with all its consequences, has made all the more imperative the economic cooperation of the two countries. It has diminished British trade and produced enormous and chronic unemployment involving for the State annually tremendous expenditure of money. We for our part have been ruined by the war to a still greater extent. It is only a minute portion of our territory which has not been the theatre of war or civil war. The remainder of the enormous territory of our Union has been crossed by armies several times and in every direction.

By our common efforts we shall be able, by fostering trade relations between our countries and reducing unemployment in England, to find ways which will make it possible for us to restore more quickly our ruined agriculture and industry.

On our side we are ready to do all we can in order to adjust the economic differences which up to the present have been considered an obstacle to economic and financial cooperation between Great Britain and the Soviet Union. This range of questions includes the

question of pre-war debts and private claims. Although with the continuous development of commercial relations between the two countries this question has lost the exceptional importance which was attached to it at Genoa and at The Hague, we are ready to submit it to detailed discussion, for we believe that if account is taken of the mutual interests of the two countries there is nothing that stands in the way of its solution.

The British Government may also count on our full and sincere goodwill as regards the political questions which face us. In our opinion, the difficulties which stand in our path can be removed by our common efforts. We have renounced the policy of conquest of the former Tsarist Government; we have annulled the old Tsarist treaties providing for the partition of oriental states into spheres of influence. The Soviet Government has no intention of reverting to that policy. It is absolutely excluded by the socialist constitution of our State, which is based on the absolute equality of nations (and the recognition of their right of self-determination).

Other reasons, too, make the return to the old policy an impossibility.

The war has awakened national consciousness in the peoples of the East, and any attempt on our part to obstruct that legitimate consciousness would be not only a crime against our own interests, but also a piece of folly, seeing that in the long run such a policy must inevitably fail. In consequence, in so far as the British and Soviet Governments adopt as a starting point the principle of respecting the independence and sovereignty of the oriental states, we shall be free from difficulty in settling all the questions pertaining to the interests of Great Britain and the Soviet Union in the East.

Although the present conversations have for their object questions connected with the relations between Great Britain and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, we believe that the scope of this Conference reaches far beyond the limits of our two countries. The programme sketched out in the Notes of the two Governments, which embraces the question of the revision of treaties signed by Great Britain and the former Governments of Russia, thereby covers the fundamental problems of the political life of the whole world.

The working masses of the Union have acclaimed the act of recognition of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics by the British Government, above all, because they saw in it not merely a diplomatic formality, but the expression of the desire of the British nation to work in common with us for the consolidation of universal peace. In this, in our view, consists the enormous historic import of the conversations which are now commencing. Every country, as you have observed yourself, Mr. Prime Minister, is interested in the success of these conversations. The endeavours of the two greatest States in the world to find not only a way to solve the questions outstanding and the differences existing between them, but also the means of solving the problems affecting the strengthening of the peace of the world, may become the starting point for a radical change in international relations.

The urgency of the problem of establishing a durable peace is becoming more and more obvious to all nations. Nevertheless, the Government of the Union observes with profound regret that, in spite of the numerous peace treaties signed after the world war, social and national conflicts have never appeared in so acute a form as at the present time. The means employed by Governments to extricate themselves from a situation which is intolerable for the masses of the people in fact result in an aggravation of the antagonism in question. The assurances commonly given during and after the world war, that it was the last war and that a limit would be set to the development of militarism, have proved illusory. Military estimates continue to swallow the major portion of national revenues; the attention of all Governments continues to be concentrated above all on preparations for war. Never was the human mind so intent on the search for new means of destruction. All experts agree that, in consequence of the present development of military chemistry, military aviation, and naval construction, and the perfecting of artillery, a war, if it should arise, would be more destructive than any recorded in history.

We consider, therefore, that the question of disarmament should present itself to Governments with perfect clarity and in an absolutely imperative manner. Disarmament must be carried to the furthest possible limits. Although during the last three years our Army has been reduced 12 times, and from 6,000,000, the strength at the beginning of 1921, we have reduced it to 500,000, spread over the immense territory of 20,000,000 square kilometers, the Government of the Soviet Union declares its readiness, provided the other States consent to do likewise, to make further decisive steps towards disarmament. Our Government is ready also to contribute in every way to the universal decrease of naval armaments, subject, however, to certain political guarantees which have already been formulated by our representative at the recent Conference at Rome. At the present moment I confine myself to a statement of the general views of our Government on this question.

We are aware of the great interest shown by the British Government and public opinion in this country in the League of Nations. The Soviet Government does not feel in the same way as England towards the League of Nations as it now exists, but they would be prepared to associate themselves with a plan of international organization which should exclude measures of coercion and reprisal. These can only result in serving the selfish interests of certain of the more powerful States. At the present time the only international organization possible, in our view, would be that into which all the Governments would enter of their own free will and on a footing of perfect equality. We find that, in observing these conditions, the principle of international cooperation should not only not be suppressed, but, on the contrary, that it should be extended. It should, in particular, be extended to labour legislation.

We consider that the Governments which desire to create the conditions of a stable peace should by common effort eliminate the causes which lead to conflicts among nations.

The Soviet Government has repeatedly declared that, according to a profound conviction, the first condition of a stable peace is the revision of the Treaty of Versailles and the other treaties connected with it. These treaties are not only opposed to the elementary interests of all nations, but their application in practice has only led to an accentuation of the struggle among all the nations, and to the ruin of the economic life of the world. Having diminished commerce and destroyed the bases of credit and exchange, they have only served to bring forth economic disorganization and unemployment.

What I have said is already familiar to public opinion in Great Britain. The same idea has been repeatedly expressed by the best-known politicians in Great Britain, as well as by the most eminent writers. Obviously, we do not think that the abrogation of the Treaty of Versailles should lead to the reconstitution of State organisms which, like Austria-Hungary, rest on violence, and existence of which provoked the antagonisms which brought on the world war.

A reorganization of Europe can only be stable if it is based on the will of peoples, and if it takes into account their aspirations for national independence. The Soviet Government, therefore, is prepared to support by common effort and to pursue—perhaps not at one stroke, but by continued diplomatic effort—the policy of revising frontiers on ethnographic principles, applying a plebiscite in all cases in which it should be necessary, as, for example, we suggested at the Vienna Conference in the case of Bessarabia.

It is obvious that we do not believe that the complete abolition of wars is possible unless the social causes which engender them are first abolished. The Soviet Government, guided by the Communist Party, considers that the elimination of war is only possible on condition of a socialist organization of economic life. We are, however, ready to collaborate in any serious attempt by any Government to diminish the danger of war.

We consider that the difference between the social structures of our two countries need not be an obstacle to their political and economic collaboration. The contrary view, which finds an echo in a certain portion of public opinion in England, is absolutely refuted by the progressive development of Anglo-Soviet commercial relations.

I consider it my duty, and, above all, after your speech, Mr. Prime Minister, to confirm today in my speech that the Soviet Government fully shares the view of the British Government that mutual nonintervention in internal affairs is one of the indispensable conditions for the creation of confidence between the two States. The principle of nonintervention is for us a guarantee against attempts which might be made in another form to make us give up the basis of our socialist organization—the nationalization of land, the nationalization of large-scale industry, the monopoly of foreign trade—and also to make us renounce our socialist legislation.

The peoples constituting the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are determined to hold fast to the conquests of the Revolution—conquests which constitute the *raison d'être* of the existence of the Soviet Government, and for which the toiling masses of the entire Union have fought against the coalition between the internal enemy and foreign Governments. With that frankness which must characterize our relations I must remind you, Mr. Prime Minister, that former British Governments also took part in that foreign intervention in Russia. You, yourself and your party, Mr. Prime Minister, struggled against that intervention, and it need no occasion surprise that the sentiments provoked amongst our working people by that intervention still exist to a certain degree. But we have met here for the purpose of dissipating these sentiments, of creating new relations of confidence, and, by liquidating the past, to banish this residue of distrust, replacing it by the most friendly relations.

Before entering on the labours of our Conference, the Soviet Delegation has thought it desirable to raise in the first instance, with a view to their immediate solution, all political and economic questions which present an equal interest for both countries, and which, by their very nature, need no preliminary detailed investigation. In this way our Conference might in the shortest time yield results which, by strengthening mutual confidence, would facilitate the solution of the more difficult problems.

We are profoundly convinced that the Government of the British people, which has created by unremitting toil the greatest industry in the world, will discover the way to a *rapprochement*, to cooperation, and to a stable peace with the toiling masses of the Union, who, liberated by the Revolution from the yoke of the old *regime*, are showing an ardent desire for economic progress and cultural development.

*The Times*, 15 April 1924: 9.



## STALIN, THE FOUNDATIONS OF LENINISM

April 1924

*In April 1924 Stalin delivered a series of lectures at Sverdlov University (an academy for party workers), which were then published serially in Pravda 26 April-18 May 1924. Under the title "Foundations of Leninism," these lectures represented an ambitious effort to codify party doctrine at this time, and especially to affirm certain features of the Leninist party, of "Leninism." Stalin undertook to define Leninism not as merely the application of Marxism to Russian conditions, but as a universal doctrine, "the Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and of the proletarian revolution." He reasserted Lenin's emphasis upon the Party as a fighting organization, disciplined and united, and its fundamental role in shaping society and, indeed, history. This work shows Stalin's repetitive but effective didactic style. It was buttressed by extensive quotations from Lenin (mostly omitted here), which were an important part of asserting Stalin's claim to be following Lenin. Reprinted many times, especially as part of the*

*work entitled Problems of Leninism, it later served as one of the fundamental doctrinal statements of Communism and the Soviet Union, achieving virtual scriptural importance during the Stalin era. It is here abridged. The references to specific pages and editions of Lenin, added later, are omitted here.*

J. Stalin

*The Foundations of Leninism*

Lectures Delivered at the Sverdlov University

Dedicated to the Lenin Enrollment

The foundations of Leninism is a big subject. To exhaust it a whole volume would be required. Indeed, a number of volumes would be required. Naturally, therefore, my lectures cannot be an exhaustive exposition of Leninism; at best they can only offer a concise synopsis of the foundations of Leninism. Nevertheless, I consider it useful to give this synopsis, in order to lay down some basic points of departure necessary for the successful study of Leninism.

Expounding the foundations of Leninism still does not mean expounding the basis of Lenin's world outlook. Lenin's world outlook and the foundations of Leninism are not identical in scope. Lenin was a Marxist, and Marxism is, of course, the basis of his world outlook. But from this it does not at all follow that an exposition of Leninism ought to begin with an exposition of the foundations of Marxism. To expound Leninism means to expound the distinctive and new in the works of Lenin that Lenin contributed to the general treasury of Marxism and that is naturally connected with his name. Only in this sense will I speak in my lectures of the foundations of Leninism.

And so, what is Leninism?

Some say that Leninism is the application of Marxism to the conditions that are peculiar to the situation in Russia. This definition contains a particle of truth, but not the whole truth by any means. Lenin, indeed, applied Marxism to Russian conditions, and applied it in a masterly way. But if Leninism were only the application of Marxism to the conditions that are peculiar to Russia it would be a purely national and only a national, a purely Russian and only a Russian, phenomenon. We know, however, that Leninism is not merely a Russian, but an international phenomenon rooted in the whole of international development. That is why I think this definition suffers from one-sidedness.

Others say that Leninism is the revival of the revolutionary elements of Marxism of the forties of the nineteenth century, as distinct from the Marxism of subsequent years, when, it is alleged, it became moderate, non-revolutionary. If we disregard this foolish and vulgar division of the teachings of Marx into two parts, revolutionary and moderate, we must admit that even this totally inadequate and unsatisfactory definition contains a particle of truth. This particle of truth is that Lenin did indeed restore the revolutionary content of Marxism, which had been suppressed by the opportunists of the Second International. Still, that is but a particle of the truth. The whole truth about Leninism is that Leninism not only restored Marxism, but also took a step forward, developing Marxism further under the new conditions of capitalism and of the class struggle of the proletariat.

What, then, in the last analysis, is Leninism?

Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular. Marx and Engels pursued their activities in the pre-revolutionary period (we have the proletarian revolution in mind), when developed imperialism did not yet exist, in the period of the proletarians' preparation for revolution, in the period when the proletarian revolution was not yet an immediate practical inevitability. But Lenin, the disciple of Marx and Engels, pursued his

activities in the period of developed imperialism, in the period of the unfolding proletarian revolution, when the proletarian revolution had already triumphed in one country, had smashed bourgeois democracy and had ushered in the era of proletarian democracy, the era of the Soviets.

That is why Leninism is the further development of Marxism.

It is usual to point to the exceptionally militant and exceptionally revolutionary character of Leninism. This is quite correct. But this specific feature of Leninism is due to two causes: firstly, to the fact that Leninism emerged from the proletarian revolution, the imprint of which it cannot but bear; secondly, to the fact that it grew and became strong in clashes with the opportunism of the Second International, the fight against which was and remains an essential preliminary condition for a successful fight against capitalism. It must not be forgotten that between Marx and Engels, on the one hand, and Lenin, on the other, there lies a whole period of undivided domination of the opportunism of the Second International, and the ruthless struggle against this opportunism could not but constitute one of the most important tasks of Leninism.

## I

### The Historical Roots of Leninism

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The significance of the imperialist war which broke out ten years ago lies, among other things, in the fact that it gathered all these contradictions into a single knot and threw them on to the scales, thereby accelerating and facilitating the revolutionary battles of the proletariat.

In other words, imperialism was instrumental not only in making the revolution a practical inevitability, but also in creating favorable conditions for a direct assault on the citadels of capitalism.

Such was the international situation which gave birth to Leninism.

Some may say: this is all very well, but what has it to do with Russia, which was not and could not be a classical land of imperialism? What has it to do with Lenin, who worked primarily in Russia and for Russia: Why did Russia, of all countries, become the home of Leninism, the birthplace of the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution?

Because Russia was the focus of all these contradictions of imperialism.

Because Russia, more than any other country, was pregnant with revolution, and she alone, therefore, was in a position to solve those contradictions in a revolutionary way....

But from this it follows that whoever wanted to strike at tsarism necessarily raised his hand against imperialism, whoever rose against tsarism had to rise against imperialism as well; for whoever was bent on overthrowing tsarism had to overthrow imperialism too, if he really intended not merely to defeat tsarism, but to make a clean sweep of it. Thus the revolution against tsarism verged on and had to pass into a revolution against imperialism, into a proletarian revolution.

Meanwhile, in Russia a tremendous popular revolution was rising, headed by the most revolutionary proletariat in the world, which possessed such an important ally as the revolutionary peasantry of Russia. Does it need proof that such a revolution could not stop halfway, that in the event of success it was bound to advance further and raise the banner of revolt against imperialism?

That is why Russia was bound to become the focus of the contradictions of imperialism, not only in the sense that it was in Russia that these contradictions were revealed most plainly, in view of their particularly repulsive and particularly intolerable character, and not only because Russia was a highly important prop of Western imperialism, connecting Western finance capital with the colonies in the East, but also because Russia was the only

country in which there existed a real force capable of resolving the contradictions of imperialism in a revolutionary way.

From this it follows, however, that the revolution in Russia could not but become a proletarian revolution, that from its very inception it could not but assume an international character, and that, therefore, it could not but shake the very foundations of world imperialism.

Under these circumstances, could the Russian Communists confine their work within the narrow national bounds of the Russian revolution? Of course not. On the contrary, the whole situation, both internal (the profound revolutionary crisis) and external (the war), impelled them to go beyond these bounds in their work, to transfer the struggle to the international arena, to expose the ulcers of imperialism, to prove that the collapse of capitalism was inevitable, to smash social chauvinism and social-pacifism, and, finally, to overthrow capitalism in their own country and to forge a new fighting weapon for the proletariat—the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution—in order to facilitate the task of overthrowing capitalism for the proletarians of all countries. Nor could the Russian Communists act otherwise, for only this path offered the chance of producing certain changes in the international situation which could safeguard Russia against the restoration of the bourgeois order.

That is why Russia became the home of Leninism, and why Lenin, the leader of the Russian Communists, became its creator.

The same thing, approximately, “happened” in the case of Russia and Lenin as in the case of Germany and Marx and Engels in the forties of the last century. Germany at that time was pregnant with bourgeois revolution just like Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century....

We cannot regard it as accidental that as early as 1902, when the Russian revolution was still in an embryonic state, Lenin wrote the prophetic words in his pamphlet: *What is to be Done?*:

“History has now confronted us (i.e., the Russian Marxists—J. St.) with an immediate task which is the *most revolutionary* of all the *immediate* tasks that confront the proletariat of any country,”

and that... “the fulfillment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European, but also (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction, would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat.”

In other words, the center of the revolutionary movement was bound to shift to Russia.

As we know, the course of the revolution in Russia has more than vindicated Lenin’s prediction.

Is it surprising, after all this, that a country which has accomplished such a revolution and possesses such a proletariat should have been the birthplace of the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution?

Is it surprising that Lenin, the leader of Russia’s proletariat, became also the creator of this theory and tactics and the leader of the international proletariat?

## II Method

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What are the requirements of this method?

Firstly, the *testing* of the theoretical dogmas of the Second International in the crucible of the revolutionary struggle of the masses, in the crucible of living practice—that is to say, the restoration of the broken unity between theory and practice, the healing of the rift between them; for only in this way can a truly proletarian party armed with revolutionary theory be created.

Secondly, the *testing* of the policy of the parties of the Second International, not by their slogans and resolutions (which cannot be trusted), but by their deeds, by their actions; for only in this way can the confidence the proletarian masses be won and deserved.

Thirdly, the *reorganization* of all Party work on new revolutionary lines, with a view to training and preparing the masses for the revolutionary struggle; for only this way can the masses be prepared for the proletarian revolution.

Fourthly, *self-criticism* within the proletarian parties, their education and training on the basis of their mistakes; for only in this way can genuine cadres genuine leaders of the Party be trained.

Such is the basis and substance of the method of Leninism....

There is no need to mention the fear the parties of the Second International have of self-criticism, their habit of concealing their mistakes, of glossing over vexed questions, of covering up their shortcomings by a deceptive show of well-being which blunts living thought and prevents the Party from deriving revolutionary training from its own mistakes—a habit which was ridiculed and pilloried by Lenin. Here is what Lenin wrote about self-criticism in proletarian parties in his pamphlet "*Left-Wing*" *Communism*:

"The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it *in practice* fulfills its obligations towards its *class* and the toiling *masses*. Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analyzing the circumstances which gave rise to it, and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the earmark of a serious party; that is the way it should perform its duties, that is the way it should educate and train the *class*, and then the *masses*."

Some say that the exposure of its own mistakes and self-criticism are dangerous for the Party because they may be used by the enemy against the party of the proletariat. Lenin regarded such objections as trivial and entirely wrong. Here is what he wrote on this subject as far back as 1904, in his pamphlet *One Step Forward*, when our Party was still weak and small:

"They (i.e., the opponents of the Marxists—J. St.) gloat and grimace over our controversies; and, of course, they will try to pick isolated passages from my pamphlet, which deals with the defects and shortcomings of our Party, and to use them for their own ends. The Russian Social-Democrats are already steeled enough in battle not to be perturbed by these pinpricks and to continue, in spite of them, their work of self-criticism and ruthless exposure of their own shortcomings, which will unquestionably and inevitably be overcome as the working-class movement grows". Such, in general, are the characteristic features of the method of Leninism.

What is contained in Lenin's method was in the main already contained in the teachings of Marx, which, according to Marx himself, were "in essence critical and revolutionary." It is precisely this critical and revolutionary spirit that pervades Lenin's method from beginning to end. But it would be wrong to suppose that Lenin's method is merely the restoration of the method of Marx. As a matter of fact, Lenin's method is not only the restoration, but also the concretisation and further development of the critical and revolutionary method of Marx, of his materialist dialectics.

### III Theory

From this theme I take three questions:

- a) the importance of theory for the proletarian movement;
- b) criticism of the "theory" of spontaneity;
- c) the theory of the proletarian revolution.

1) *The importance of theory*. Some think that Leninism is the precedence of practice over theory in the sense that its main point is the translation of the Marxist theses into



deeds, their "execution"; as for theory, it is alleged that Leninism is rather unconcerned about it. We know that Plekhanov time and again chaffed Lenin about his "unconcern" for theory, and particularly for philosophy. We also know that theory is not held in great favor by many present-day Leninist practical workers, particularly in view of the immense amount of practical work imposed upon them by the situation. I must declare that this more than odd opinion about Lenin and Leninism is quite wrong and bears no relation whatever to the truth; that the attempt of practical workers to brush theory aside runs counter to the whole spirit of Leninism and is fraught with serious dangers to the work.

Theory is the experience of the working-class movement in all countries taken in its general aspect. Of course, theory becomes purposeless if it is not connected with revolutionary practice, just as practice gropes in the dark if its path is not illumined by revolutionary theory. But theory can become a tremendous force in the working-class movement if it is built up in indissoluble connection with revolutionary practice; for theory, and theory alone, can give the movement confidence, the power of orientation, and an understanding of the inner relation of surrounding events; for it, and it alone, can help practice to realize not only how and in which direction classes are moving at the present time, but also how and in which direction they will move in the near future. None other than Lenin uttered and repeated scores of times the well-known thesis that:

*"Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement"* (see Vol. IV, p. 380).

Lenin, better than anyone else, understood the great importance of theory, particularly for a party such as ours, in view of the role of vanguard fighter of the international proletariat which has fallen to its lot, and in view of the complicated internal and international situation in which it finds itself. Foreseeing this special role of our Party as far back as 1902, he thought it necessary even then to point out that:

*"The role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory"* (see Vol. IV, p. 380).

It scarcely needs proof that now, when Lenin's prediction about the role of our Party has come true, this thesis of Lenin's acquires special force and special importance.

Perhaps the most striking expression of the great importance which Lenin attached to theory is the fact that none other than Lenin undertook the very serious task of generalizing, on the basis of materialist philosophy, the most important achievements of science from the time of Engels down to his own time, as well as of subjecting to comprehensive criticism the anti-materialistic trends among Marxists. Engels said that "materialism must assume a new aspect with every new great discovery." It is well known that none other than Lenin accomplished this task for his own time in his remarkable work *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. It is well known that Plekhanov, who loved to chaff Lenin about his "unconcern" for philosophy, did not even dare to make a serious attempt to undertake such a task.

2) *Criticism of the "theory" of spontaneity, or the role of the vanguard in the movement.* The "theory" of spontaneity is a theory of opportunism, a theory of worshipping the spontaneity of the labor movement, a theory which actually repudiates the leading role of the vanguard of the working class, of the party of the working class....

It scarcely needs proof that this spurious "Marxism," designed to hide the nakedness of opportunism, is merely a European variety of the selfsame theory of "khvostism" which Lenin fought even before the first Russian revolution.

It scarcely needs proof that the demolition of this theoretical falsification is a preliminary condition for the creation of truly revolutionary parties in the West.

3) *The theory of the proletarian revolution.* Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution proceeds from three fundamental theses.

*First thesis:* The domination of finance capital in the advanced capitalist countries; the issue of stocks and bonds as one of the principal operations of finance capital; the export of capital to the sources of raw materials, which is one of the foundations of imperialism; the omnipotence of a financial oligarchy, which is the result of the domination of finance capital—all this reveals the grossly parasitic character of monopolistic capitalism, makes the yoke of the capitalist trusts and syndicates a hundred times more burdensome, intensified the indignation of the working class with the foundation of capitalism, and brings the masses to the proletarian revolution as their only salvation (see Lenin, *Imperialism*).

Hence the first conclusion: intensification of the revolutionary crisis within the capitalist countries and growth of the elements of an explosion on the internal, proletarian front in the “metropolises.”

*Second thesis:* The increase in the export of capital to the colonies and dependent countries; the expansion of “spheres of influence” and colonial possessions until they cover the whole globe; the transformation of capitalism into a *world system* of financial enslavement and colonial oppression of the vast majority of the population of the world by a handful of “advanced” countries—all this has, on the one hand, converted the separate national economies and national territories into links in a single chain called world economy, and, on the other hand, split the population of the globe into two camps: a handful of “advanced” capitalist countries which exploit and oppress vast colonies and dependencies, and the huge majority consisting of colonial and dependent countries which are compelled to wage a struggle for liberation from the imperialist yoke (see *Imperialism*).

Hence the second conclusion: intensification of the revolutionary crisis in the colonial countries and growth of the elements of revolt against imperialism on the external, colonial front.

*Third thesis:* The monopolistic possession of “spheres of influence” and colonies; the uneven development of the capitalist countries, leading to a frenzied struggle for the redivision of the world between the countries which have already seized territories and those claiming their “share”; imperialist wars as the only means of restoring the disturbed “equilibrium”—all this leads to the intensification of the struggle on the third front, the inter-capitalist front, which weakens imperialism and facilitates the union of the first two fronts against imperialism: the front of the revolutionary proletariat and the front of colonial emancipation (see *Imperialism*).

Hence the third conclusion: that under imperialism wars cannot be averted, and that a coalition between the proletarian revolution in Europe and the colonial revolution in the East in a united world front of revolution against the world front of imperialism is inevitable.

Lenin combines all these conclusions into one general conclusion that “*imperialism is the eve of the socialist revolution*” (my italics—J.S.).

The very approach to the question of the proletarian revolution, of the character of the revolution, of its scope, of its depth, the scheme of the revolution in general, changes accordingly.

Formerly, the analysis of the pre-requisites for the proletarian revolution was usually approached from the point of view of the economic state of individual countries. Now, this approach is no longer adequate. Now the matter must be approached from the point of view of the economic state of all or the majority of countries, from the point of view of the state of world economy; for individual countries and individual national economies have ceased to be self-sufficient units, have become links in a single chain called world economy; for the old “cultured” capitalism has evolved into imperialism, and imperialism is a world system of financial enslavement and colonial oppression of the vast majority of the population of the world by a handful of “advanced” countries.

Formerly it was the accepted thing to speak of the existence or absence of objective conditions for the proletarian revolution in individual countries, or, to be more precise, in one or another developed country. Now this point of view is no longer adequate. Now we must speak of the existence of objective conditions for the revolution in the entire system of world imperialist economy as an integral whole; the existence within this system of some countries that are not sufficiently developed industrially cannot serve as an insuperable obstacle to the revolution, *if* the system as a whole or, more correctly, *because* the system as a whole is already ripe for revolution.

Formerly it was the accepted thing to speak of the proletarian revolution in one or another developed country as of a separate and self-sufficient entity opposing a separate national front of capital as its antipode. Now, this point of view is no longer adequate. Now we must speak of the world proletarian revolution; for the separate national fronts of capital have become links in a single chain called the world front of imperialism, which must be opposed by a common front of the revolutionary movement in all countries.

Formerly the proletarian revolution was regarded exclusively as the result of the internal development of a given country. Now, this point of view is no longer adequate. Now the proletarian revolution must be regarded primarily as the result of the development of the contradictions within the world system of imperialism, as the result of the breaking of the chain of the world imperialist front in one country or another.

Where will the revolution begin? Where, in what country, can the front of capital be pierced first?

Where industry is more developed, where the proletariat constitutes the majority, where there is more culture, where there is more democracy—that was the reply usually given formerly.

No, objects the Leninist theory of revolution, *not necessarily where industry is more developed*, and so forth. The front of capital will be pierced where the chain of imperialism is weakest, for the proletarian revolution is the result of the breaking of the chain of the world imperialist front at its weakest link; and it may turn out that the country which has started the revolution, which has made a breach in the front of capital, is less developed in a capitalist sense than other, more developed, countries, which have, however, remained within the framework of capitalism.

In 1917 the chain of the imperialist world front proved to be weaker in Russia than in the other countries. It was there that the chain broke and provided an outlet for the proletarian revolution....

Briefly: the chain of the imperialist front must, as a rule, break where the links are weaker and, at all events, not necessarily where capitalism is more developed, where there is such and such a percentage of proletarians and such and such a percentage of peasants, and so on.

That is why in deciding the question of proletarian revolution statistical estimates of the percentage of the proletarian population in a given country lose the exceptional importance so eagerly attached to them by the doctrinaires of the Second International, who have not understood imperialism and who fear revolution like the plague.

To proceed. The heroes of the Second International asserted (and continue to assert) that between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the proletarian revolution there is a chasm, or at any rate a Chinese Wall, separating one from the other by a more or less protracted interval of time, during which the bourgeoisie having come into power, develops capitalism, while the proletariat accumulates strength and prepares for the "decisive struggle" against capitalism. This interval is usually calculated to extend over many decades, if not longer. It scarcely needs proof that this Chinese Wall "theory" is totally devoid of scientific meaning under the conditions of imperialism, that it is and can be only a means of concealing and camouflaging the counterrevolutionary aspirations of the bourgeoisie. It scarcely needs proof that under the conditions of imperialism, fraught as it is

with collisions and wars; under the conditions of the "eve of the socialist revolution," when "flourishing" capitalism becomes "moribund" capitalism (Lenin) and the revolutionary movement is growing in all countries of the world; when imperialism is allying itself with all reactionary forces without exception, down to and including tsarism and serfdom, thus making imperative the coalition of all revolutionary forces, from the proletarian movement of the West to the national liberation movement of the East; when the overthrow of the survivals of the regime of feudal serfdom becomes impossible without a revolutionary struggle against imperialism—it scarcely needs proof that the bourgeois-democratic revolution, in a more or less developed country, must under such circumstances verge upon the proletarian revolution, that the former must pass into the latter. The history of the revolution in Russia has provided palpable proof that this thesis is correct and incontrovertible. It was not without reason that Lenin, as far back as 1905, on the eve of the first Russian revolution, in his pamphlet *Two Tactics* depicted the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist revolution as two links in the same chain, as a single and integral picture of the sweep of the Russian revolution....

Some comrades believe, it seems, that Lenin arrived at this idea only in 1916, that up to that time he had thought that the revolution in Russia would remain within the bourgeois framework, that power, consequently, would pass from the hands of the organ of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry into the hands of the bourgeoisie and not of the proletariat. It is said that this assertion has even penetrated into our communist press. I must say that this assertion is absolutely wrong, that it is totally at variance with the facts....

Very well, we may be told; but if that is the case, why did Lenin combat the idea of "permanent (uninterrupted) revolution"?

Because Lenin proposed that the revolutionary capacities of the peasantry be "exhausted" and that the fullest use be made of their revolutionary energy for the complete liquidation of tsarism and for the transition to the proletarian revolution, whereas the adherents of "permanent revolution" did not understand the important role of the peasantry in the Russian revolution, underestimated the strength of the revolutionary energy of the peasantry, underestimated the strength and ability of the Russian proletariat to lead the peasantry, and thereby hampered the work of emancipating the peasantry from the influence of the bourgeoisie, the work of rallying the peasantry around the proletariat.

Because Lenin proposed that the revolution be *crowned* with the transfer of power to the proletariat, whereas the adherents of "permanent" revolution wanted to *begin* at once with the establishment of the power of the proletariat, failing to realize that in so doing they were closing their eyes to such a "minor detail" as the survivals of serfdom and were leaving out of account so important a force as the Russian peasantry, failing to understand that such a policy could only retard the winning of the peasantry over to the side of the proletariat.

Consequently, Lenin fought the adherents of "permanent" revolution, not over the question of uninterruptedness, for Lenin himself maintained the point of view of uninterrupted revolution, but because they underestimated the role of the peasantry, which is an enormous reserve of the proletariat, because they failed to understand the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat....

To proceed. Formerly, the victory of the revolution in one country was considered impossible, on the assumption that it would require the combined action of the proletarians of all or at least of a majority of the advanced countries to achieve victory over the bourgeoisie. Now this point of view no longer fits in with the facts. Now we must proceed from the possibility of such a victory, for the uneven and spasmodic character of the development of the various capitalist countries under the conditions of imperialism, the development within imperialism of catastrophic contradictions leading to inevitable wars, the growth of the revolutionary movement in all countries of the world—all this leads, not only to the possibility, but also to the necessity of the victory of the proletariat in individual

countries. The history of the revolution in Russia is direct proof of this. At the same time, however, it must be borne in mind that the overthrow of the bourgeoisie can be successfully accomplished only when certain absolutely necessary conditions exist, in the absence of which there can be even no question of the proletariat taking power....

But the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and establishment of the power of the proletariat in one country does not yet mean that the complete victory of socialism has been ensured. After consolidating its power and leading the peasantry in its wake the proletariat of the victorious country can and must build a socialist society. But does this mean that it will thereby achieve the complete and final victory of socialism, i.e., does it mean that with the forces of only one country it can finally consolidate socialism and fully guarantee that country against intervention and, consequently, also against restoration? No, it does not. For this the victory of the revolution in at least several countries is needed. Therefore, the development and support of revolution in other countries is an essential task of the victorious revolution. Therefore, the revolution which has been victorious in one country must regard itself not as a self sufficient entity, but as an aid, as a means for hastening the victory of the proletariat in other countries.

Lenin expressed this thought succinctly when he said that the task of the victorious revolution is to do "the utmost possible in one country for the development, support and awakening of the revolution in all countries".

These, in general, are the characteristic features of Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution.

## V

### The Dictatorship of the Proletariat

From this theme I take three fundamental questions:

- a) the dictatorship of the proletariat as the instrument of the proletarian revolution;
- b) the dictatorship of the proletariat as the rule of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie;
- c) Soviet power as the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

1) *The dictatorship of the proletariat as the instrument of the proletarian revolution.* The question of the proletarian dictatorship is above all a question of the main content of the proletarian revolution. The proletarian revolution, its movement, its sweep and its achievements acquire flesh and blood only through the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the instrument of the proletarian revolution, its organ, its most important mainstay, brought into being for the purpose of firstly, crushing the resistance of the overthrown exploiters and consolidating the achievements of the proletarian revolution, and, secondly, carrying the proletarian revolution to its completion, carrying the revolution to the complete victory of socialism. The revolution can defeat the bourgeoisie, can overthrow its power, even without the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the revolution will be unable to crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie, to maintain its victory and to push forward to the final victory of socialism unless, at a certain stage in its development, it creates a special organ in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat as its principal mainstay.

"The fundamental question of every revolution is the question of power" (*Lenin*). Does this mean that all that is required is to assume power, to seize it? No, it does not....

2) *The dictatorship of the proletariat as the rule of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie.* From the foregoing it is evident that the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a mere change of personalities in the government, a change of the "cabinet," etc., leaving the old economic and political order intact....

The dictatorship of the proletariat is not a change of government, but a new state, with new organs of power, both central and local; it is the state of the proletariat, which has arisen on the ruins of the old state, the state of the bourgeoisie.

The dictatorship of the proletariat arises not on the basis of the bourgeois order, but in the process of the breaking up of this order, after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, in the process of the expropriation of the landlords and capitalists, in the process of the socialization of the principal instruments and means of production, in the process of violent proletarian revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a revolutionary power based on the use of force against the bourgeoisie.

The state is a machine in the hands of the ruling class for suppressing the resistance of its class enemies. *In this respect* the dictatorship of the proletariat does not differ essentially from the dictatorship of any other class, for the proletarian state is a machine for the suppression of the bourgeoisie. But there is one *substantial* difference. This difference consists in the fact that all hitherto existing class states have been dictatorships of an exploiting minority over the exploited majority, whereas the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of the exploited majority over the exploiting minority.

Briefly: *the dictatorship of the proletariat is the rule—unrestricted by law and based on force—of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, a rule enjoying the sympathy and support of the laboring and exploited masses* (Lenin, *The State and Revolution*).

From this follow two main conclusions:

*First conclusion:* The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be “complete” democracy, democracy for *all*, for the rich as well as for the poor; the dictatorship of the proletariat “must be a state that is democratic in a new way (for the proletarians and the non-property in general) and dictatorial in a new way (against (my italics—J.St.) the bourgeoisie)”....

In other words, the law of violent proletarian revolution, the law of the smashing of the bourgeois state machine as a preliminary condition for such a revolution, is an inevitable law of the revolutionary movement in the imperialist countries of the world.

Of course, in the remote future, if the proletariat is victorious in the principal capitalist countries, and if the present capitalist encirclement is replaced by a socialist encirclement, a “peaceful” path of development is quite possible for certain capitalist countries, whose capitalists, in view of the “unfavorable” international situation, will consider it expedient “voluntarily” to make substantial concessions to the proletariat. But this supposition applies only to a remote and possible future. With regard to the immediate future, there is no ground whatsoever for this supposition.

Therefore, Lenin is right in saying:

“The proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machine and the substitution for it of a new one”.

3) *Soviet power as the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.* The victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat signifies the suppression of the bourgeoisie, and the smashing of the bourgeois state machine, and the substitution of proletarian democracy for bourgeois democracy. That is clear. But by means of what organizations can this colossal work be carried out? The old forms of organization of the proletariat, which grew up on the basis of bourgeois parliamentarism, are inadequate for this work—of that there can hardly be any doubt. What, then, are the new forms of organization of the proletariat that are capable of serving as the gravediggers of the bourgeois state machine, that are capable not only of smashing this machine, not only of substituting proletarian democracy for bourgeois democracy, but also of becoming the foundation of the proletarian state power.

This new form of organization of the proletariat is the Soviets.

Wherein lies the strength of the Soviets as compared with the old forms of organization?

In that the Soviets are the most *all-embracing* mass organizations of the proletariat, for they and they alone embrace all workers without exception.

In that the Soviets are the *only* mass organizations which unite all the oppressed and exploited, workers and peasants, soldiers and sailors, and in which the vanguard of the masses, the proletariat, can, for this reason, most easily and most completely exercise its political leadership of the mass struggle.

In that the Soviets are the *most powerful organs* of the revolutionary struggle of the masses, of the political actions of the masses, of the uprising of the masses—organs capable of breaking the omnipotence of finance capital and its political appendages.

In that the Soviets are the *immediate* organizations of the masses themselves, i.e., they are *the most democratic* and therefore the most authoritative organizations of the masses, which facilitate to the utmost their participation in the work of building up the new state and in its administration, and which bring into full play the revolutionary energy, initiative and creative abilities of the masses in the struggle for the destruction of the old order, in the struggle for the new, proletarian order.

Soviet power is the union and constitution of the local Soviets into one common state organization, into the state organization of the proletariat as the vanguard of the oppressed and exploited masses and as the ruling class—their union in the Republic of Soviets....

Wherein lie the characteristic features of Soviet power?

In that Soviet power is the most all-embracing and most democratic state organization of all possible state organizations while classes continue to exist; for, being the arena of the bond and collaboration between the workers and the exploited peasants in their struggle against the exploiters, and basing itself in its work on this bond and on this collaboration, Soviet power is thus the power of the majority of the population over the minority, it is the state of the majority, the expression of its dictatorship.

In that Soviet power is the most internationalist of all state organizations in class society, for, by destroying every kind of national oppression and resting on the collaboration of the laboring masses of the various nationalities, it facilitates the uniting of these masses into a single state union.

In that Soviet power, by its very structure, facilitates the task of leading the oppressed and exploited masses by the vanguard of these masses—by the proletariat, as the most united and most politically conscious core of the Soviets.

“The experience of all revolutions and of all movements of the oppressed classes, the experience of the world socialist movement teaches us,” says Lenin, “that the proletariat alone is able to unite and lead the scattered and backward strata of the toiling and exploited population”. The point is that the structure of Soviet power facilitates the practical application of the lessons drawn from this experience.

In that Soviet power, by combining legislative and executive power in a single state organization and replacing territorial electoral constituencies by industrial units, factories and mills, thereby directly links the workers and the laboring masses in general with the apparatus of state administration, teaches them how to govern the country.

In that Soviet power alone is capable of releasing the army from its subordination to bourgeois command and of converting it from the instrument of oppression of the people which it is under the bourgeois order into an instrument for the liberation of the people from the yoke of the bourgeoisie, both native and foreign.

In that “the Soviet organization of the state alone is capable of immediately and effectively smashing and finally destroying the old, i.e., the bourgeois, bureaucratic and judicial apparatus”.

In that the Soviet form of state alone, by drawing the mass organizations of the toilers and exploited into constant and unrestricted participation in state administration is capable of preparing the ground for the withering away of the state, which is one of the basic elements of the future stateless communist society.

The Republic of Soviets is thus the political form so long sought and finally discovered, within the framework of which the economic emancipation of the proletariat, the complete victory of socialism, must be accomplished. The Paris Commune was the embryo of this form; Soviet power is its development and culmination. That is why Lenin says:

"The Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies is not only the form of a higher type of democratic institution...but is the *only* (my italics—J.St.) form capable of ensuring the most painless transition to socialism".

## V

## The Peasant Question

From this theme I take four questions:

- a) the presentation of the question;
- b) the peasantry during the bourgeois-democratic revolution;
- c) the peasantry during the proletarian revolution;
- d) the peasantry after the consolidation of Soviet power.

1) *The presentation of the question.* Some think that the fundamental thing in Leninism is the peasant question, that the point of departure of Leninism is the question of the peasantry, of its role, its relative importance. This is absolutely wrong. The fundamental question of Leninism, its point of departure, is not the peasant question, but the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the conditions under which it can be achieved, of the conditions under which it can be consolidated. The peasant question, as the question of the ally of the proletariat in its struggle for power, is a derivative question.

This circumstance, however, does not in the least deprive the peasant question of the serious and vital importance it unquestionably has for the proletarian revolution....

The question is as follows: Are the revolutionary potentialities latent in the peasantry by virtue of certain conditions of its existence *already exhausted*, or not; and if not, *is there any hope, any basis*, for utilizing these potentialities *for* the proletarian revolution, for transforming the peasantry, the exploited majority of it, from the reserve of the bourgeoisie which it was during the bourgeois revolutions in the West and still is even now, into a reserve of the proletariat, into its ally?

Leninism replies to this question in the affirmative, i.e., it recognizes the existence of revolutionary capacities in the ranks of the majority of the peasantry, and the possibility of using these in the interests of the proletarian dictatorship....

4) *The peasantry after the consolidation of Soviet power.* Whereas before, in the first period of the revolution, the main objective was the overthrow of tsarism, and later, after the February Revolution, the primary objective was to get out of the imperialist war by overthrowing the bourgeoisie, now, after the liquidation of the civil war and the consolidation of Soviet power, questions of economic construction came to the forefront. Strengthen and develop the nationalized industry; for this purpose link up industry with peasant economy through state-regulated trade; replace the surplus-appropriation system by the tax in kind so as, later on, by gradually lowering the tax in kind, to reduce matters to the exchange of products of industry for the products of peasant farming; revive trade and develop the co-operatives, drawing into them the vast masses of the peasantry—this is how Lenin outlined the immediate tasks of economic construction on the way to building the foundations of socialist economy....

What do all these facts prove?

That the skeptics are wrong.

That Leninism is right in regarding the masses of laboring peasants as the reserve of the proletariat.

That the proletariat in power can and must use this reserve in order to link industry with agriculture, to advance socialist construction, and to provide for the dictatorship of the proletariat that necessary foundation without which the transition to socialist economy is impossible.



## VI

## The National Question

From this theme I take two main questions:

- a) the presentation of the question;
- b) the liberation movement of the oppressed peoples and the proletarian revolution.

1) *The presentation of the question.* During the last two decades the national question has undergone a number of very important changes. The national question in the period of the Second International and the national question in the period of Leninism are far from being the same thing. They differ profoundly from each other, not only in their scope, but also in their intrinsic character.

Formerly, the national question was usually confined to a narrow circle of questions, concerning, primarily, "civilized" nationalities. The Irish, the Hungarians, the Poles, the Finns, the Serbs, and several other European nationalities—that was the circle of unequal peoples in whose destinies the leaders of the Second International were interested. The scores and hundreds of millions of Asiatic and African peoples who are suffering national oppression in its most savage and cruel form usually remained outside of their field of vision. They hesitated to put white and black, "civilized" and "uncivilized" on the same plane. Two or three meaningless, lukewarm resolutions, which carefully evaded the question of liberating the colonies—that was all the leaders of the Second International could boast of. Now we can say that this duplicity and half-heartedness in dealing with the national question has been brought to an end. Leninism laid bare this crying incongruity, broke down the wall between whites and blacks, between Europeans and Asiatics, between the "civilized" and "uncivilized" slaves of imperialism, and thus linked the national question with the question of the colonies. The national question was thereby transformed from a particular and internal state problem into a general and international problem, into a world problem of emancipating the oppressed peoples in the dependent countries and colonies from the yoke of imperialism.

Formerly, the principle of self-determination of nations was usually misinterpreted, and not infrequently it was narrowed down to the idea of the right of nations to autonomy. Certain leaders of the Second International even went so far as to turn the right to self-determination into the right to cultural autonomy, i.e., the right of oppressed nations to have their own cultural institutions, leaving all political power in the hands of the ruling nation. As a consequence, the idea of self-determination stood in danger of being transformed from an instrument for combating annexations into an instrument for justifying them. Now we can say that this confusion has been cleared up. Leninism broadened the conception of self-determination, interpreting it as the right of the oppressed peoples of the dependent countries and colonies to complete secession, as the right of nations to independent existence as states. This precluded the possibility of justifying annexations by interpreting the right to self-determination as the right to autonomy. Thus, the principle of self-determination itself was transformed from an instrument for deceiving the masses, which it undoubtedly was in the hands of the social-chauvinists during the imperialist war, into an instrument for exposing all imperialist aspirations and chauvinist machinations, into an instrument for the political education of the masses in the spirit of internationalism.

Formerly, the question of the oppressed nations was usually regarded as purely a juridical question. Solemn proclamations about "national equality of rights," innumerable declarations about the "equality of nations"—that was the stock-in-trade of the parties of the Second International, which glossed over the fact that "equality of nations" under imperialism, where one group of nations (a minority) lives by exploiting another group of nations, is sheer mockery of the oppressed nations. Now we can say that this bourgeois-juridical point of view on the national question has been exposed. Leninism brought the national question down from the lofty heights of high-sounding declarations to solid ground, and declared that pronouncements about the "equality of nations" not backed by

the direct support of the proletarian parties for the liberation struggle of the oppressed nations are meaningless and false. In this way the question of the oppressed nations became one of supporting the oppressed nations, of rendering real and continuous assistance to them in their struggle against imperialism for real equality of nations, for their independent existence as states.

Formerly, the national question was regarded from a reformist point of view, as an independent question having no connection with the general question of the power of capital, of the overthrow of imperialism, of the proletarian revolution. It was tacitly assumed that the victory of the proletariat in Europe was possible without a direct alliance with the liberation movement in the colonies, that the national-colonial question could be solved on the quiet, "of its own accord," off the highway of the proletarian revolution, without a revolutionary struggle against imperialism. Now we can say that this antirevolutionary point of view has been exposed. Leninism has proved, and the imperialist war and the revolution in Russia have confirmed, that the national question can be solved only in connection with and on the basis of the proletarian revolution, and that the road to victory of the revolution in the West lies through the revolutionary alliance with the liberation movement of the colonies and dependent countries against imperialism. The national question is a part of the general question of the proletarian revolution, a part of the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The question is as follows: Are the revolutionary potentialities latent in the revolutionary liberation movement of the oppressed countries *already exhausted*, or not; and if not, is there any hope, any basis, for utilizing these potentialities for the proletarian revolution, for transforming the dependent and colonial countries from a reserve of the imperialist bourgeoisie into a reserve of the revolutionary proletariat, into an ally of the latter?

Leninism replies to this question in the affirmative, i.e., it recognizes the existence of revolutionary capacities in the national liberation movement of the oppressed countries, and the possibility of using these for overthrowing the common enemy, for overthrowing imperialism. The mechanics of the development of imperialism, the imperialist war and the revolution in Russia wholly confirm the conclusions of Leninism on this score.

Hence the necessity for the proletariat of the "dominant" nations to support—resolutely and actively to support the national liberation movement of the oppressed and dependent peoples....

2) *The liberation movement of the oppressed peoples and the proletarian revolution.* In solving the national question Leninism proceeds from the following theses:

a) the world is divided into two camps: the camp of a handful of civilized nations, which possess finance capital and exploit the vast majority of the population of the globe; and the camp of the oppressed and exploited peoples in the colonies and dependent countries, which constitute that majority;

b) the colonies and the dependent countries, oppressed and exploited by finance capital, constitute a vast reserve and a very important source of strength for imperialism;

c) the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples in the dependent and colonial countries against imperialism is the only road that leads to their emancipation from oppression and exploitation;

d) the most important colonial and dependent countries have already taken the path of the national liberation movement, which cannot but lead to the crisis of world capitalism;

e) the interests of the proletarian movement in the developed countries and of the national liberation movement in the colonies call for the union of these two forms of the revolutionary movement into a common front against the common enemy, against imperialism;

f) the victory of the working class in the developed countries and the liberation of the oppressed peoples from the yoke of imperialism are impossible without the formation and the consolidation of a common revolutionary front;

g) the formation of a common revolutionary front is impossible unless the proletariat of the oppressor nations renders direct and determined support to the liberation movement of the oppressed peoples against the imperialism of its "own country," for "no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations" (*Engels*);

h) this support implies the upholding, defence and implementation of the slogan of the right of nations to secession, to independent existence as states;

i) unless this slogan is implemented, the union and collaboration of nations within a single world economic system, which is the material basis for the victory of world socialism, cannot be brought about;

j) this union can only be voluntary, arising on the basis of mutual confidence and fraternal relations among peoples.

Hence the two sides, the two tendencies in the national question: the tendency towards political emancipation from the shackles of imperialism and towards the formation of an independent national state—a tendency which arose as a consequence of imperialist oppression and colonial exploitation; and the tendency towards closer economic relations among nations, which arose as a result of the formation of a world market and a world economic system....

For imperialism these two tendencies represent irreconcilable contradictions; because imperialism cannot exist without exploiting colonies and forcibly retaining them within the framework of the "integral whole"; because imperialism can bring nations together only by means of annexations and colonial conquest, without which imperialism is, generally speaking, inconceivable.

For communism, on the contrary, these tendencies are but two sides of a single cause—the cause of the emancipation of the oppressed peoples from the yoke of imperialism; because communism knows that the union of peoples in a single world economic system is possible only on the basis of mutual confidence and voluntary agreement, and that the road to the formation of a voluntary union of peoples lies through the separation of the colonies from the "integral" imperialist "whole," through the transformation of the colonies into independent states.

Hence the necessity for a stubborn, continuous and determined struggle against the dominant-nation chauvinism of the "Socialists" of the ruling nations (Britain, France, America, Italy, Japan, etc.), who do not want to fight their imperialist governments, who do not want to support the struggle of the oppressed peoples in "their" colonies for emancipation from oppression, for secession....

## VII

### Strategy and Tactics

From this theme I take six questions:

- a) strategy and tactics as the science of leadership in the class struggle of the proletariat;
- b) stages of the revolution, and strategy;
- c) the flow and ebb of the movement, and tactics;
- d) strategic leadership;
- e) tactical leadership;
- f) reformism and revolutionism.

1) *Strategy and tactics as the science of leadership in the class struggle of the proletariat.* The period of the domination of the Second International was mainly a period of the formation and training of the proletarian political armies under conditions of more or less peaceful development. It was the period of parliamentarism as the predominant form of the class struggle....

Only in the subsequent period, the period of direct action by the proletariat, the period of proletarian revolution, when the question of overthrowing the bourgeoisie became a question of immediate practical action; when the question of the reserves of the proletariat

(strategy) became one of the most burning questions; when all forms of struggle and of organization, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary (tactics), had quite clearly manifested themselves—only in this period could an integral strategy and elaborated tactics for the struggle of the proletariat be worked out. It was precisely in this period that Lenin brought out into the light of day the brilliant ideas of Marx and Engels on tactics and strategy that had been suppressed by the opportunists of the Second International. But Lenin did not confine himself to restoring particular tactical propositions of Marx and Engels. He developed them further and supplemented them with new ideas and propositions, combining them all into a system of rules and guiding principles for the leadership of the class struggle of the proletariat. Lenin's pamphlets, such as *What Is To Be Done?*, *Two Tactics, Imperialism, The State and Revolution*, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, *"Left-Wing" Communism*, undoubtedly constitute priceless contributions to the general treasury of Marxism, to its revolutionary arsenal. The strategy and tactics of Leninism constitute the science of leadership in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

2) *Stages of the revolution, and strategy.* Strategy is the determination of the direction of the main blow of the proletariat at a given stage of the revolution, the elaboration of a corresponding plan for the disposition of the revolutionary forces (main and secondary reserves), the fight to carry out this plan throughout the given stage of the revolution.

Our revolution had already passed through two stages, and after the October Revolution it entered a third one. Our strategy changed accordingly.

*First stage.* 1903 to February 1917. Objective: to overthrow tsarism and completely wipe out the survivals of medievalism....

*Second stage.* March 1917 to October 1917. Objective: to overthrow imperialism in Russia and to withdraw from the imperialist war....

*Third stage.* Began after the October Revolution. Objective: to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, using it as a base for the defeat of imperialism in all countries. The revolution spreads beyond the confines of one country; the epoch of world revolution has begun. The main forces of the revolution: the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in all countries. Main reserves: the semi-proletarian and small-peasant masses in the developed countries, the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries. Direction of the main blow: isolation of the petty bourgeois democrats, isolation of the parties of the Second International, which constitute the main support of the policy of *compromise* with imperialism. Plan for the disposition of forces: alliance of the proletarian revolution with the liberation movement in the colonies and the dependent countries.

Strategy deals with the main forces of the revolution and their reserves. It changes with the passing of the revolution from one stage to another, but remains basically unchanged throughout a given stage.

3) *The flow and ebb of the movement, and tactics.* Tactics are the determination of the line of conduct of the proletariat in the comparatively short period of the flow or ebb of the movement, of the rise or decline of the revolution, the fight to carry out this line by means of replacing old forms of struggle and organization by new ones, old slogans by new ones, by combining these forms, etc. While the object of strategy is to win the war against tsarism, let us say, or against the bourgeoisie, to carry through the struggle against tsarism or against the bourgeoisie to its end, tactics pursue less important objects, for their aim is not the winning of the war as a whole, but the winning of some particular engagements or some particular battles, the carrying through successfully of some particular campaigns or actions corresponding to the concrete circumstances in the given period of rise or decline of the revolution. Tactics are a part of strategy, subordinate to it and serving it....

4) *Strategic leadership*....

The task of strategic leadership is to make proper use of all these reserves for the achievement of the main object of the revolution at the given stage of its development.

What does making proper use of reserves mean?

It means fulfilling certain necessary conditions, of which the following must be regarded as the principal ones:

*Firstly.* The concentration of the main forces of the revolution at the enemy's most vulnerable spot at the decisive moment, when the revolution has already become ripe, when the offensive is going full-steam ahead, when insurrection is knocking at the door, and when bringing the reserves up to the vanguard is the decisive condition of success....

*Secondly.* The selection of the moment for the decisive blow, of the moment for starting the insurrection, so timed as to coincide with the moment when the crisis has reached its climax, when it is already the case that the vanguard is prepared to fight to the end, the reserves are prepared to support the vanguard, and maximum consternation reigns in the ranks of the enemy....

The manner in which the October uprising was carried out may be taken as a model of such strategy.

Failure to observe this condition leads to a dangerous error called "loss of tempo," when the Party lags behind the movement or runs far ahead of it, courting the danger of failure. An example of such "loss of tempo" of how the moment for an uprising should not be chosen, may be seen in the attempt made by a section of our comrades to begin the uprising by arresting the Democratic Conference in September 1917, when wavering was still apparent in the Soviets, when the armies at the front were still at the crossroads, when the reserves had not yet been brought up to the vanguard.

*Thirdly.* Undeviating pursuit of the course adopted, no matter what difficulties and complications are encountered on the road towards the goal; this is necessary in order that the vanguard may not lose sight of the main goal of the struggle and that the masses may not stray from the road while marching towards that goal and striving to rally around the vanguard. Failure to observe this condition leads to a grave error, well known to sailors as "losing one's bearings...."

*Fourthly.* Manoeuvring the reserves with a view to effecting a proper retreat when the enemy is strong, when retreat is inevitable, when to accept battle forced upon us by the enemy is obviously disadvantageous, when, with the given relation of forces, retreat becomes the only way to escape a blow against the vanguard and to retain the reserves for the latter....

5) *Tactical leadership.* Tactical leadership is a part of strategic leadership, subordinated to the tasks and the requirements of the latter. The task of tactical leadership is to master all forms of struggle and organization of the proletariat and to ensure that they are used properly so as to achieve, with the given relation of forces, the maximum results necessary to prepare for strategic success....

6) *Reformism and revolutionism.* What is the difference between revolutionary tactics and reformist tactics?

Some think that Leninism is opposed to reform, opposed to compromises and to agreements in general. This is absolutely wrong. Bolsheviks know as well as anybody else that in a certain sense "every little bit helps," that under certain conditions reforms in general, and compromises and agreements in particular, are necessary and useful....

Obviously, therefore, it is not a matter of reforms or of compromises and agreements, but of the use people make of reforms and agreements.

To a reformist, reforms are everything, while revolutionary work is something incidental, something just to talk about, mere eyewash. That is why, with reformist tactics under the conditions of bourgeois rule, reforms are inevitably transformed into an instrument for strengthening that rule, an instrument for disintegrating the revolution.

To a revolutionary, on the contrary, the main thing is revolutionary work and not reforms; to him reforms are a by-product of the revolution. That is why, with revolutionary tactics under the conditions of bourgeois rule, reforms are naturally transformed into an

instrument for disintegrating that rule, into an instrument for strengthening the revolution, into a strongpoint for the further development of the revolutionary movement.

The revolutionary will accept a reform in order to use it as an aid in combining legal work with illegal work and to intensify, under its cover, the illegal work for the revolutionary preparation of the masses for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

That is the essence of making revolutionary use of reforms and agreements under the conditions of imperialism....

## VIII

### The Party

In the pre-revolutionary period, the period of more or less peaceful development, when the parties of the Second International were the predominant force in the working-class movement and parliamentary forms of struggle were regarded as the principal forms—under these conditions the Party neither had nor could have had that great and decisive importance which it acquired afterwards, under conditions of open revolutionary clashes....

But matters have changed radically with the dawn of the new period. The new period is one of open class collisions, of revolutionary action by the proletariat, of proletarian revolution, a period when forces are being directly mustered for the overthrow of imperialism and the seizure of power by the proletariat. In this period the proletariat is confronted with new tasks, the tasks of reorganizing all party work on new, revolutionary lines; of educating the workers in the spirit of revolutionary struggle for power; of preparing and moving up reserves; of establishing an alliance with the proletarians of neighboring countries; of establishing firm ties with the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries, etc., etc. To think that these new tasks can be performed by the old Social-Democratic parties, brought up as they were in the peaceful conditions of parliamentarism, is to doom oneself to hopeless despair, to inevitable defeat. If, with such tasks to shoulder, the proletariat remained under the leadership of the old parties it would be completely unarmed. It scarcely needs proof that the proletariat could not consent to such a state of affairs.

Hence the necessity for a new party, a militant party, a revolutionary party, one bold enough to lead the proletarians in the struggle for power, sufficiently experienced to find its bearings amidst the complex conditions of a revolutionary situation, and sufficiently flexible to steer clear of all submerged rocks in the path to its goal.

Without such a party it is useless even to think of overthrowing imperialism, of achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This new party is the party of Leninism.

What are the specific features of this new party?

1) *The Party as the advanced detachment of the working class.* The Party must be, first of all, the *advanced* detachment of the working class. The Party must absorb all the best elements of the working class, their experience, their revolutionary spirit, their selfless devotion to the cause of the proletariat. But in order that it may really be the advanced detachment, the Party must be armed with revolutionary theory, with a knowledge of the laws of the movement, with a knowledge of the laws of revolution. Without this it will be incapable of directing the struggle of the proletariat, of leading the proletariat. The Party cannot be a real party if it limits itself to registering what the masses of the working class feel and think, if it drags at the tail of the spontaneous movement, if it is unable to overcome the inertia and the political indifference of the spontaneous movement, if it is unable to rise above the momentary interests of the proletariat, if it is unable to raise the masses to the level of understanding the class interests of the proletariat. The Party must stand at the head of the working class; it must see farther than the working class; it must lead the proletariat, and not drag at the tail of the spontaneous movement. The parties of the Second International, which preach "khvostism," are vehicles of bourgeois policy, which condemn the proletariat to the role of a tool in the hands of the bourgeoisie. Only a party which adopts the standpoint of advanced detachment of the proletariat and is able to raise

the masses to the level of understanding the class interests of the proletariat—only such a party can divert the working class from the path of trade unionism and convert it into an independent political force.

The Party is the political leader of the working class.

I have already spoken of the difficulties of the struggle of the working class, of the complicated conditions of the struggle, of strategy and tactics, of reserves and manoeuvring, of attack and retreat. These conditions are no less complicated, if not more so, than the conditions of war. Who can see clearly in these conditions, who can give correct guidance to the proletarian millions? No army at war can dispense with an experienced General Staff if it does not want to be doomed to defeat. Is it not clear that the proletariat can still less dispense with such a General Staff if it does not want to allow itself to be devoured by its mortal enemies? But where is this General Staff? Only the revolutionary party of the proletariat can serve as this General Staff. The working class without a revolutionary party is an army without a General Staff.

The Party is the General Staff of the proletariat.

But the Party cannot be only an *advanced* detachment. It must at the same time be a detachment of the *class*, part of the class, closely bound up with it by all the fibers of its being. The distinction between the advanced detachment and the rest of the working class, between Party members and non-Party people, cannot disappear until classes disappear; it will exist as long as the ranks of the proletariat continue to be replenished with former members of other classes, as long as the working class as a whole is not in a position to rise to the level of the advanced detachment. But the Party would cease to be a party if this distinction developed into a gap, if the Party turned in on itself and became divorced from the non-Party masses. The Party cannot lead the class if it is not connected with the non-Party masses, if there is no bond between the Party and the non-Party masses, if these masses do not accept its leadership, if the Party enjoys no moral and political credit among the masses....

The Party is an inseparable part of the working class....

2) *The Party as the organized detachment of the working class.* The Party is not only the *advanced* detachment of the working class. If it desires really to direct the struggle of the class it must at the same time be the organized detachment of its class. The Party's tasks under the conditions of capitalism are immense and extremely varied. The Party must direct the struggle of the proletariat under the exceptionally difficult conditions of internal and external development; it must lead the proletariat in the offensive when the situation calls for an offensive; it must lead the proletariat so as to escape the blow of a powerful enemy when the situation calls for retreat; it must imbue the millions of unorganized non-Party workers with the spirit of discipline and system in the struggle, with the spirit of organization and endurance. But the Party can fulfil these tasks only if it is itself the embodiment of discipline and organization, if it is itself the *organized* detachment of the proletariat. Without these conditions there can be no question of the Party really leading the vast masses of the proletariat.

The Party is the organized detachment of the working class....

3) *The Party as the highest form of class organization of the proletariat.* The Party is the organized detachment of the working class. But the Party is not the only organization of the working class. The proletariat has also a number of other organizations, without which it cannot wage a successful struggle against capital: trade unions, co-operatives, factory organizations, parliamentary groups, non-Party women's associations, the press, cultural and educational organizations, youth leagues, revolutionary fighting organizations (in times of open revolutionary action), Soviets of deputies as the form of state organization (if the proletariat is in power), etc. The overwhelming majority of these organizations are non-Party, and only some of them adhere directly to the Party, or constitute offshoots from it. All these organizations, under certain conditions, are absolutely necessary for the

working class, for without them it would be impossible to consolidate the class positions of the proletariat in the diverse spheres of struggle; for without them it would be impossible to steel the proletariat as the force whose mission it is to replace the bourgeois order by the socialist order. But how can single leadership be exercised with such an abundance of organizations? What guarantee is there that this multiplicity of organizations will not lead to divergency in leadership? It may be said that each of these organizations carries on its work in its own special field, and that therefore these organizations cannot hinder one another. That, of course, is true. But it is also true that all these organizations should work in one direction for they serve *one* class, the class of the proletarians. The question then arises: who is to determine the line, the general direction, along which the work of all these organizations is to be conducted? Where is the central organization which is not only able, because it has the necessary experience, to work out such a general line, but, in addition, is in a position, because it has sufficient prestige, to induce all these organizations to carry out this line, so as to attain unity of leadership and to make hitches impossible?

That organization is the Party of the proletariat.

The Party possesses all the necessary qualifications for this because, in the first place, it is the rallying center of the finest elements in the working class, who have direct connections with the non-Party organizations of the proletariat and very frequently lead them; because, secondly, the Party, as the rallying center of the finest members of the working class, is the best school for training leaders of the working class, capable of directing every form of organization of their class; because, thirdly, the Party, as the best school for training leaders of the working class, is, by reason of its experience and prestige, the only organization capable of centralizing the leadership of the struggle of the proletariat, thus transforming each and every non-Party organization of the working class into an auxiliary body and transmission belt linking the Party with the class.

The Party is the highest form of class organization of the proletariat....

4) *The Party as an instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat.* The Party is the highest form of organization of the proletariat. The Party is the principal guiding force within the class of the proletarians and among the organizations of that class. But it does not by any means follow from this that the Party can be regarded as an end in itself, as a self-sufficient force. The Party is not only the highest form of class association of the proletarians; it is at the same time an *instrument* in the hands of the proletariat *for* achieving the dictatorship when that has not yet been achieved and *for* consolidating and expanding the dictatorship when it has already been achieved....

The proletariat needs the Party *for* the purpose of achieving and maintaining the dictatorship. The party is an instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But from this it follows that when classes disappear and the dictatorship of the proletariat withers away, the Party also will wither away.

5) *The Party as the embodiment of unity of will, unity incompatible with the existence of factions.* The achievement and maintenance of the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible without a party which is strong by reason of its solidarity and iron discipline. But iron discipline in the Party is inconceivable without unity of will, without complete and absolute unity of action on the part of all members of the Party. This does not mean, of course, that the possibility of conflicts of opinion within the Party is thereby precluded. On the contrary, iron discipline does not preclude but presupposes criticism and conflict of opinion within the Party. Least of all does it mean that discipline must be "blind." On the contrary, iron discipline does not preclude but presupposes conscious and voluntary submission, for only conscious discipline can be truly iron discipline. But after a conflict of opinion has been closed, after criticism has been exhausted and a decision has been arrived at, unity of will and unity of action of all Party members are the necessary conditions without which neither Party unity nor iron discipline in the Party is conceivable....



The Party represents unity of will, which precludes all factionalism and division of authority in the Party.

Hence Lenin's warning about the "danger of factionalism from the point of view of Party unity and of effecting the unity of will of the vanguard of the proletariat as the fundamental condition for the success of the dictatorship of the proletariat," which is embodied in the special resolution of the Tenth Congress of our Party "On Party Unity."

Hence Lenin's demand for the "complete elimination of all factionalism" and the "immediate dissolution of all groups, without exception, that have been formed on the basis of various platforms," on pain of "unconditional and immediate expulsion from the Party" (see the resolution "On Party Unity").

6) *The Party becomes strong by purging itself of opportunist elements.* The source of factionalism in the Party is its opportunist elements. The proletariat is not an isolated class. It is constantly replenished by the influx of peasants, petty bourgeois and intellectuals proletarianised by the development of capitalism....

In one way or another, all these petty-bourgeois groups penetrate into the Party and introduce into it the spirit of hesitancy and opportunism, the spirit of demoralization and uncertainty. It is they, principally, that constitute the source of factionalism and disintegration, the source of disorganization and disruption of the Party from within. To fight imperialism with such "allies" in one's rear means to put oneself in the position of being caught between two fires, from the front and from the rear. Therefore, ruthless struggle against such elements, their expulsion from the Party, is a pre-requisite for the successful struggle against imperialism....

The Party becomes strong by purging itself of opportunist elements....

## IX

### Style in Work

I am not referring to literary style. What I have in mind is style in work, that specific and peculiar feature in the practice of Leninism which creates the special type of Leninist worker. Leninism is a school of theory and practice which trains a special type of Party and state worker, creates a special Leninist style in work.

What are the characteristic features of this style? What are its peculiarities?

It has two specific features:

- a) Russian revolutionary sweep and
- b) American efficiency.

The style of Leninism consists in combining these two specific features in Party and state work.

Russian revolutionary sweep is an antidote to inertia, routine, conservatism, mental stagnation and slavish submission to ancient traditions. Russian revolutionary sweep is the life-giving force which stimulates thought, impels things forward, breaks the past and opens up perspectives. Without it no progress is possible.

But Russian revolutionary sweep has every chance of degenerating in practice into empty "revolutionary" Manilovism if it is not combined with American efficiency in work. Examples of this degeneration are only too numerous. Who does not know the disease of "revolutionary" scheme concocting and "revolutionary" plan drafting, which springs from the belief in the power of decrees to arrange everything and re-make everything?...

American efficiency, on the other hand, is an antidote to "revolutionary" Manilovism and fantastic scheme concocting. American efficiency is that indomitable force which neither knows nor recognizes obstacles; which with its businesslike perseverance brushes aside all obstacles; which continues at a task once started until it is finished, even if it is a minor task; and without which serious constructive work is inconceivable.

But American efficiency has every chance of degenerating into narrow and unprincipled practicalism if it is not combined with Russian revolutionary sweep. Who has not heard

of that disease of narrow empiricism and unprincipled practicalism which has not infrequently caused certain "Bolsheviks" to degenerate and to abandon the cause of the revolution? We find a reflection of this peculiar disease in a story by B. Pilnyak, entitled *The Barren Year*, which depicts types of Russian "Bolsheviks" of strong will and practical determination who "function" very "energetically," but without vision, without knowing "what it is all about," and who, therefore, stray from the path of revolutionary work. No one has ridiculed this disease of practicalism so incisively as Lenin. He branded it as "narrow-minded empiricism" and "brainless practicalism." He usually contrasted it with vital revolutionary work and the necessity of having a revolutionary perspective in all our daily activities, thus emphasizing that this unprincipled practicalism is as repugnant to true Leninism as "revolutionary" scheme concocting.

The combination of Russian revolutionary sweep with American efficiency is the essence of Leninism in Party and state work.

This combination alone produces the finished type of Leninist worker, the style of Leninism in work.

Stalin, *Works*, VI: 71-196.



#### AGREEMENT BETWEEN CHINA AND THE U.S.S.R.

31 May 1924

*Relations with China and the revolutionary movements there were a major concern of Soviet foreign policy during most of the 1920s. The Soviet leadership turned their attention eastward after revolution in the West failed to materialize. This agreement and its declarations established formal relations between the two countries. The Soviet Union relinquished extra-territoriality, concessions at Tientsin and Hankow, and the remainder of the Boxer indemnity. The Chinese Eastern Railroad was placed under joint ownership.*

#### AGREEMENT between China and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics for the Settlement of Pending Questions, with Declarations and Exchange of Notes.

The Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, desiring to re-establish normal relations with each other, have agreed to conclude an agreement on general principles for the settlement of the questions between the two countries, and have to that end named as their plenipotentiaries, that is to say:

His Excellency the President of the Republic of China: Vi Kyuin Wellington Koo;

The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Lev Mikhailovitch Karakhan:

Who, having communicated to each other their respective full powers, found to be in good and due form, have agreed upon the following articles:

Article 1. Immediately upon the signing of the present agreement, the normal diplomatic and consular relations between the two contracting parties shall be re-established.

The Government of the Republic of China agrees to take the necessary steps to transfer to the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the legation and consular buildings formerly belonging to the Tsarist Government.

2. The Governments of the two contracting parties agree to hold, within 1 month after the signing of the present agreement, a conference which shall conclude and carry out

detailed arrangements relative to the questions in accordance with the principles as provided in the following articles.

Such detailed arrangements shall be completed as soon as possible and, in any case, not later than 6 months from the date of the opening of the conference as provided in the preceding paragraph.

3. The Governments of the two contracting parties agree to annul at the conference, as provided in the preceding article, all conventions, treaties, agreements, protocols, contracts, etc., concluded between the Government of China and the Tsarist Government and to replace them with new treaties, agreements, etc., on the basis of equality, reciprocity and justice, as well as the spirit of the declarations of the Soviet Government of the years of 1919 and 1920.

4. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in accordance with its policy and declarations of 1919 and 1920, declares that all treaties, agreements, etc., concluded between the former Tsarist Government and any third party or parties affecting the sovereign rights or interests of China are null and void.

The Governments of both contracting parties declare that in the future neither Government will conclude any treaties or agreements which prejudice the sovereign rights or interests of either contracting party.

5. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics recognises that Outer Mongolia is an integral part of the Republic of China and respects China's sovereignty therein.

The Government of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics declares that, as soon as the questions for the withdrawal of all the troops of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from Outer Mongolia—namely, as to the time-limit of the withdrawal of such troops and the measures to be adopted in the interests of the safety of the frontiers—are agreed upon at the conference as provided in Article 2 of the present agreement, it will effect the complete withdrawal of all the troops of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from Outer Mongolia.

6. The Governments of the two contracting parties mutually pledge themselves not to permit, within their respective territories, the existence and/or activities of any organisations or groups whose aim is to struggle by acts of violence against the Governments of either contracting party.

The Governments of the two contracting parties further pledge themselves not to engage in propaganda directed against the political and social systems of either contracting party.

7. The Governments of the two contracting parties agree to re-demarcate their national boundaries at the conference as provided in Article 2 of the present agreement, and, pending such re-demarcation, to maintain the present boundaries.

8. The Governments of the two contracting parties agree to regulate at the aforementioned conference the questions relating to the navigation of rivers, lakes and other bodies of water which are common to their respective frontiers, on the basis of equality and reciprocity.

9. The Governments of the two contracting parties agree to settle at the aforementioned conference the question of the Chinese Eastern Railway in conformity with the principles as hereinafter provided:

(1) The Governments of the two contracting parties declare that the Chinese Eastern Railway is a purely commercial enterprise.

The Governments of the two contracting parties mutually declare that, with the exception of matters pertaining to the business operations which are under the direct control of the Chinese Eastern Railway, all other matters affecting the rights of the national and the local Governments of the Republic of China—such as judicial matters, matters relating to civil administration, military administration, police, municipal government, taxation and

landed property (with the exception of lands required by the said railway)—shall be administered by the Chinese authorities.

(2) The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees to the redemption by the Government of the Republic of China, with Chinese capital, of the Chinese Eastern Railway, as well as all appurtenant properties, and to the transfer to China of all shares and bonds of the said railway.

(3) The Governments of the two contracting parties shall settle at the conference, as provided in Article 2 of the present agreement, the amount and conditions governing the redemption as well as the procedure for the transfer of the Chinese Eastern Railway.

(4) The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees to be responsible for the entire claims of the shareholders, bondholders and creditors of the Chinese Eastern Railway incurred prior to the Revolution of the 9th March, 1917.

(5) The Governments of the two contracting parties mutually agree that the future of the Chinese Eastern Railway shall be determined by the Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the exclusion of any third party or parties.

(6) The Governments of the two contracting parties agree to draw up an arrangement for the provisional management of the Chinese Eastern Railway pending the settlement of the questions as provided under section (3) of the present article.

(7) Until the various questions relating to the Chinese Eastern Railway are settled at the conference as provided in Article 2 of the present agreement, the rights of the two Governments arising out of the contract of the 27th August/8th September, 1896, for the construction and operations of the Chinese Eastern Railway, which do not conflict with the present agreement and the agreement for the provisional management of the said railway and which do not prejudice China's rights of sovereignty, shall be maintained.

10. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees to renounce the special rights and privileges relating to all concessions in any part of China acquired by the Tsarist Government under various conventions, treaties, agreements, etc.

11. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees to renounce the Russian portion of the Boxer Indemnity.

12. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees to relinquish the rights of extra-territoriality and consular jurisdiction.

13. The Governments of the two contracting parties agree to draw up simultaneously with the conclusion of a commercial treaty and the conference, as provided in Article 2 of the present agreement, a customs tariff for the two contracting parties in accordance with the principles of equality and reciprocity.

14. The Governments of the two contracting parties agree to discuss at the aforementioned conference questions relating to the claims for the compensation of losses.

15. The present agreement shall come into effect from the date of signature.

In witness whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the present agreement in duplicate in the English language and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at the city of Peking this 31st day of the 5th month of the 13th year of the Republic of China which is the 31st day of May, 1924.

V. K. WELLINGTON KOO.

L. M. KARAKHAN.

#### *Declaration I*

The Government of the Republic of China and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics declare that immediately after the signing of the agreement on general principles between the Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the 31st May, 1924, they will reciprocally hand over to each other all the real estate and movable property owned by China and the former Tsarist Government and found in their

respective territories. For this purpose each government will furnish the other with a list of the property to be so transferred.

In faith whereof the respective plenipotentiaries of the Governments of the two contracting parties have signed the present declaration in duplicate in the English language and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at the city of Peking this 31st day of the 5th month of the 13th year of the Republic of China, which is the 31st day of May, 1924.

V. K. WELLINGTON KOO.

L. M. KARAKHAN.

### *Declaration II*

The Government of the Republic of China and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics hereby declare that it is understood that, with regard to the buildings and landed property of the Russian Orthodox Mission, belonging as it does to the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the questions of the transfer or other suitable disposal of the same will be jointly determined at the conference provided in Article 2 of the agreement on general principles between the Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the 31st May, 1924, in accordance with the internal laws and regulations existing in China regarding property-holding in the inland. As regards the buildings and property of the Russian Orthodox Mission, belonging as it does to the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, at Peking and Patachu, the Chinese Government will take steps to immediately transfer the same as soon as the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will designate a Chinese person or organisation, in accordance with the laws and regulations existing in China regarding property-holding in the inland.

Meanwhile the Government of the Republic of China will at once take measures with a view to guarding all the said buildings and property and clearing them of all the persons now living there.

It is further understood that this expression of understanding has the same force and validity as a general declaration embodies in the said agreement on general principles.

In faith whereof the respective plenipotentiaries of the Governments of the two contracting parties have signed the present declaration in duplicate in the English language and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done in the city of Peking this 31st day of the 5th month of the 13th year of the Republic of China, which is the 31st day of May, 1924.

V. K. WELLINGTON KOO.

L. M. KARAKHAN.

### *Declaration III*

The Government of the Republic of China and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics jointly declare that it is understood that, with reference to Article 4 of the agreement on general principles between the Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the 31st May, 1924, the Government of the Republic of China will not and does not recognise as valid any treaty, agreement, etc., concluded between Russia since the Tsarist regime and any third party or parties affecting the sovereign rights and interests of the Republic of China. It is further understood that this expression of understanding has the same force and validity as a general declaration embodied in the said agreement on general principles.

In faith whereof the respective plenipotentiaries of the Governments of the two contracting parties have signed the present declaration in duplicate in the English language and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done in the city of Peking this 31st day of the 5th month of the 13th year of the Republic of China, which is the 31st day of May, 1924.

V. K. WELLINGTON KOO.

L. M. KARAKHAN.

#### *Declaration IV*

The Government of the Republic of China and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics jointly declare that it is understood that the Government of the Republic of China will not transfer, either in part or in whole, to any third Power or any foreign organisation the special rights and privileges renounced by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in Article 10 of the agreement on general principles between the Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the 31st May, 1924. It is further understood that this expression of understanding has the same force and validity as a general declaration embodied in the said agreement on general principles.

In faith whereof the respective plenipotentiaries of the Governments of the two contracting parties have signed the present declaration in duplicate in the English language and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at the city of Peking this 31st day of the 5th month of the 13th year of the Republic of China, which is the 31st day of May, 1924.

V. K. WELLINGTON KOO.

L. M. KARAKHAN.

#### *Declaration V*

The Government of the Republic of China and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics jointly declare that it is understood that, with reference to Article 11 of the agreement on general principles between the Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of the 31st May, 1924—

(1) The Russian share of the Boxer Indemnity which the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics renounces will, after the satisfaction of all prior obligations secured thereon, be entirely appropriated to create a fund for the promotion of education among the Chinese people.

(2) A special commission will be established to administer and allocate the said fund. This commission will consist of three persons, two of whom will be appointed by the Government of the Republic of China and one by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Decisions of the said commission will be taken by unanimous vote.

(3) The said fund will be deposited as it accrues from time to time in a bank to be designated by the said commission.

It is further understood that this expression of understanding has the same force and validity as a general declaration embodied in the said agreement on general principles.

In faith whereof the respective plenipotentiaries of the Governments of the two contracting parties have signed the present declaration in duplicate in the English language and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at the city of Peking this 31st day of the 5th month of the 13th year of the Republic of China, which is the 31st day of May, 1924.

V. K. WELLINGTON KOO.

L. M. KARAKHAN.

#### *Declaration VI*

The Government of the Republic of China and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agree that they will establish equitable provisions at the conference as

provided in Article 2 of the agreement on general principles between the Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of the 31st May, 1924, for the regulation of the situation created for the citizens of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics by the relinquishment of the rights of extra-territoriality and consular jurisdiction under Article 12 of the aforementioned agreement, it being understood, however, that the nationals of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be entirely amenable to Chinese jurisdiction.

In faith whereof the respective plenipotentiaries of the Governments of the two contracting parties have signed the present declaration in duplicate in the English language and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at the city of Peking this 31st day of the 5th month of the 13th year of the Republic of China, which is the 31st day of May, 1924.

V. K. WELLINGTON KOO.

L. M. KARAKHAN.

*Exchange of Notes*

*(No. 1)—The Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Soviet Plenipotentiary Representative at Peking.*

Peking, May 31, 1924

Dear Mr. Karakhan,

On behalf of my Government, I have the honour to declare that, an agreement on general principles for the settlement of the questions between the Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics having been signed between us today, the Government of the Republic of China, in the interests of friendship between the Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, discontinue the services of all the subjects of the former Russian Empire now employed in the Chinese army and police force, as they constitute by their presence or activities a menace to the safety of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. If you will furnish my Government with a list of such persons, the authorities concerned will be instructed to adopt the necessary action.

I have, etc.

V. K. WELLINGTON KOO

*(No. 2)—The Soviet Plenipotentiary Representative at Peking to the Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs*

Peking, May 31, 1924

Dear Dr. Koo,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the following note from you under this day:—

[See No. 1.]

In reply, I beg to state, on behalf of my Government, that I have taken note of the same, and that I agree to the propositions as contained therein.

I have, etc.

L. M. KARAKHAN.

U.K. *British Foreign and State Papers, 1925, Part II: 263-270.*



## THE PARTY ON PRESS AND LITERATURE

31 May 1924

The Party remained concerned over the two related issues of the press in general and literature in particular, and stressed the linkage of the two in the resolution "On the Press" at the Thirteenth Party Congress. Most of the resolution addressed itself to issues concerning the press in general, including newspapers, journals and books. It stressed the educative role of the press, and called for a strengthening of certain aspects, such as newspapers and journals directed toward women workers, as well as presses serving "the nationalities, peasants and Red Army." Inexpensive editions of Lenin's works, in many languages, were deemed "urgent." The resolution also addressed the ongoing quarrels among the literary groups, and especially the problem of the demands of "proletarian writers" groups against the "fellow-travellers." Indeed, a special conference was held prior to the Congress to discuss this matter. The resolution encouraged the development of writers from among the workers and peasants, but also supported the non-party fellow-travellers (who included many of the best writers). It refused to endorse any one school or trend as speaking for the Party, but did reaffirm the Party's right to set standards and guide literary life. What was especially clear was that literature was seen as part of a broader "press" question and as part of a general concern with the political literacy of the population.

## ON THE PRESS

1. The past year has been characterized by a growth in the volume of the periodical press (from two to three million), by a consolidation of its material position, by qualitative improvement, and by a strengthening of its ties with the broad toiling masses through worker, peasant, military, and other correspondents—who are elements of a true workers' democracy. Together with the major conquests in the dissemination of the workers' and party press, one must note the growth of the village press, headed by *Krest'ianskaia Gazeta*, which is winning over the individual subscriber, and also certain successes in increasing the printing of the nationality press. All of these achievements must serve only as the point of departure for further systematic work of increasing the printing of our papers and improving their quality. The task of the forthcoming year must be: *no party member who does not subscribe to and read the party newspaper; not one man or woman worker, or Red Army man, who does not read a newspaper; two million newspapers into the villages—not less than one newspaper for each ten peasant homes.*
2. Under present conditions the press takes on particular significance as an instrument for educating and organizing the toiling masses. The tie between the press and the masses must be strengthened, the press must be brought closer to the masses, and the principal effort must be concentrated on explaining the fundamental questions of life of the millions of workers and peasants. This must determine the tasks and the contents of the party, worker, and peasant newspapers and the books for the corresponding strata.
3. In accord with the cultural and political growth of the working class, the mass workers' press must intensify and deepen its elucidation of political and economic questions (the international position of the USSR, the world workers' movement, questions of finance, co-operation and trade, of wages, industry, and agriculture, of the activities of the control commissions and Rabkrin in improving the state apparatus), linking this with questions of factory life and production (the experience of *Gudok* [Whistle]). The workers' press must also satisfy readers' demands in matters of general education and must devote systematic attention to scientific, technical, and literary questions (columns, surveys, bibliography). Workers' papers must systematically discuss village life from the viewpoint of consolidating the union of the working class and the peasantry.



Further work must be done on the language of the newspapers and on the skilful combination of maximum popular appeal and clarity of exposition with serious and comprehensive content.

4. A very important task of the workers' press is to service the needs of the Lenin Enrollment, its training in the bolshevik spirit, and its involvement in practical work (party and social).

In this connection it is necessary to create an all-union mass party newspaper and at the same time to intensify the discussion of matters of party policy, party construction, party life, and the propaganda of leninism in all organs of the mass workers' press.

5. The Congress considers it necessary to impress upon our party, Soviet, and trade union press their duty of especially careful analysis of the work of the co-operatives, especially their lower-level organs and of a businesslike presentation of propaganda for the co-operatives, noting true practical achievements, local initiative, and experience, unmasking speculation and abuse of private trading capital, unifying the masses in the struggle against private capital and at the same time subjecting to severe criticism all abuses, bureaucratism, sloppiness, and incorrect conduct (choice of goods, false expenses) of co-operative construction. Party organs must be more attentive to the co-operative press and must assign party workers to it.

6. The Congress notes with satisfaction the considerable successes achieved by *Pravda* in expanding its press run and improving its contents, and, in particular, as regards its handling of questions of party life. The Congress instructs the Central Committee to assign the necessary staff to the party's central organ, *Pravda*, to enable it systematically to explain the foundations of bolshevism and to wage a campaign against any deviations from it. It is also necessary to strengthen and improve the leading party organs in the national republics and the major centers, incorporating in them generally sections on 'party life.'

7. The trade union press must become a mass press and must concentrate its principal attention on servicing the daily economic and cultural needs of the working class, tying them in with the overall tasks of the trade union movement; it must devote attention, in the first place, to the work of the factory committees, delegates' meetings, and union organizations, heightening their authority and uniting them with the broad proletarian masses. The trade union press must be in closer contact with its readers and subscribers (mass recruitment of trade union correspondents at the lower levels, transition to individual subscriptions). The mass trade union journals must take the course of servicing the broad circles of lower-level trade union workers and leading members of the unions. The party organs must promote the improvement and consolidation of the trade union press.

8. The press must be obliged to listen with maximum sensitivity to the demands and proposals emanating from the masses. The institution of worker correspondents must be consolidated in every way, and they must be carefully safeguarded from any sort of red tape or bureaucratism. The basic form of worker-correspondent organization must be their unification at the newspaper. Party assistance and guidance of the worker correspondent movement must take the form of intensifying their communist education, of helping the newspapers to select worker correspondents, of organizing political-educational work among the worker-correspondents (circles, clubs, short-term courses, congresses, etc.), and of helping them improve their professional skills as worker correspondents. Intensified attention by the party and the trade unions to the worker-correspondents should in no way be transformed into tutelage (censorship of the lower-level cells, the factory committees, etc.). Party work in the worker-correspondent movement must be oriented toward the further mass involvement of fresh working-class cadres in this movement (especially those from the Lenin Enrollment) and toward a comprehensive strengthening and enhancement of the ties of the worker-correspondents with the masses, both in the production process and in everyday life.

9. In our press system wall newspapers take on ever-increasing significance as instruments of influence on the masses and as a technique for bringing to light their activity. The factory and plant newspapers already play a major role in the improvement of production, in its correct organization and in building a new way of life, in the struggle against illiteracy and religious prejudices. Wall newspaper work in the factories must be done with all possible assistance from, and under the leadership of, the party cells and the Komsomol. The party committees must enhance their leadership of wall newspaper work.

In the countryside the wall newspaper must become one of the most important forms of the work of village party and Komsomol cells. It must struggle for an improvement of the peasant economy, for the cooperatives, for an improvement in the cultural level of the village, for the interests of the weaker peasants, against the exploitative tendencies of the kulak and against administrative abuses. The village wall newspaper must be closely tied in with the reading room, the agricultural station and the school.

10. The network of peasant weekly newspapers must be extended, the existing peasant newspapers must be strengthened, their press runs increased, their content improved, and their ties with the peasants strengthened by a massive involvement of village correspondents through the 'reading aloud,' 'friends of the press,' 'recitation,' and other circles. The work of village correspondents must be comprehensively assisted by the party and soviet organs. An attentive attitude to letters from the peasants, the processing of all peasants' complaints in the soviets, legal assistance to the peasants, the skilful combination of agricultural information with the explanation of general political and economic issues, in particular, the problem of co-operation, and finally, a presentation which is accessible to the peasant without any false over-simplification or unnecessary vulgarization—are all essential qualities of a mass peasant press.

The press of the Red Army and Red Navy is of great significance for serving the peasantry; it must be strengthened in every way, and its content and language must be adapted to the young men who are pouring into the army. Wide use must also be made of conscripts from the countryside to establish a link between the peasantry and the Red Army and peasant newspapers.

11. The transition of the national republics press to the local languages must be completed, an effort must be made to increase the press run of the nationality press and to strengthen its union with the masses through worker and peasant correspondents, and through the development of a newspaper format which is adapted to the level of the backward peasantry of the national republics. The national press in particular needs to be reinforced by party leadership and must be strengthened by politically steadfast party worker-journalists. With regard to publication, all national publishing houses must come over on the whole to the use of the non-Russian languages, to the output of high-quality and low-priced texts for primary schools, mass popular books for the worker and peasant, and a popular leninist series accessible to the broad masses of the local population.

12. The developing work of the Komsomol is far from being adequately serviced by literature. A network of young people's oblast newspapers (for workers, peasants, and national minorities) must be established and secured. An all-Russian Komsomol newspaper must be created. Particular attention must be directed to the peasant and nationality papers and to extending the network of young worker and peasant correspondents.

Komsomol publication work must be strengthened, especially by adding to the Komsomol editorial boards marxist editors who are party members.

The primary task of the Komsomol must be the creation of a literature for the peasant youth masses. Party leadership must be strengthened, and strict ideological steadfastness ensured, in the issuance of youth literature by soviet, party, and other publishers. All work in this area must be co-ordinated with the educational activities of the Komsomol. Particular attention should be directed to popular youth literature on the history of the RKP and especially on the bolshevik struggle against opportunism and intra-party deviations.

A start must be made in creating a children's literature under the painstaking supervision and leadership of the party in order to increase the class, international, and labor educational aspects of this literature. In particular, publication of Young Pioneer literature must be developed, with party, trade union, and soviet organizations helping the Komsomol in this effort.

13. The existing periodicals for women workers and peasants must be strengthened, and in the general press organs more attention must be directed to explaining the problems of the daily life and work of the broad masses of women workers and peasants. The participation of women workers and peasants in our press must be enhanced (women workers, peasants, and trade union correspondents), with primary emphasis on women leninists, women delegates, etc.

Particular attention must be directed to involving women workers and peasants in wall newspaper work. Party members working in the public press must also be brought in to service publications for women workers and peasants.

In the eastern republics the general press must devote the greatest possible attention to the emancipation of women and to the adoption of measures leading to the creation of a periodical and non-periodical press in the national languages directed at the toiling eastern women.

14. All published material must become cheaper. In the matter of distribution, staff and funds must be concentrated on making the maximum numbers of books and newspapers available to the broad masses by developing a locally based network of book dealers using all existing distribution apparatuses (contractors, the post offices, and especially the cooperative system). The distribution of printed matter must become less expensive, and party leadership in this matter must be strengthened. The offices of the People's Commissariat of Post and Telegraph must improve their distribution of printed materials, particularly in the villages, and all possible support must be given to the voluntary mass associations for the distribution of literature (Komsomol, factory, and plant associations, village 'books and newspaper' circles, etc.).

15. Special state financial assistance must be concentrated on *support for the nationalities, peasant, and Red Army press*, specialized mass literature for peasants, and publication of the works of V.I. Lenin by allocating appropriate funds from the state budget and, in the national republics, from the local budgets as well.

16. Urgent measures must be adopted to issue, in all the languages of the Union, national editions in many printings of the works of V.I. Lenin, devoting particular attention to the editorial aspects of these editions, their accessibility, low cost, and distribution. A series of condensations of the works of V.I. Lenin is to be organized for use by party members of the Lenin Enrolment and by non-party persons. The Congress instructs the Central Committee to publish without undue delay a complete edition of the works of V.I. Lenin in Russian and of his selected works in all the major non-Russian languages of the Union.

17. While noting the strengthening of our publishing houses and the considerable expansion of publishing, the Congress feels that efforts must be intensified: 1) to ensure greater differentiation and specialization of publishing houses with respect to basic types and forms of publication 2) to develop and strengthen the publishing houses in the principal nationality and oblast centers; 3) to merge party, soviet, trade union, and co-operative publishers both in the centers and at the local level in order to intensify the influence of party committees on the work of publishers, and to ensure the best co-ordination of their publishing schedules as well as the best organization of publishing and distribution.

18. Work must be intensified on the creation and publication of mass, high-quality popular books and pamphlets which are entirely accessible to the workers and peasants, so that serving the broad masses will be the fundamental and primary task of our publishers; the publication of popular, and low-cost peasant literature must be improved and strengthened, with particular attention to the lowest, semi-literate, peasant reader and to the output of publications of practical use and interest for the village.

As regards academic materials, the fundamental task must be the final transition to the publication of new, high-quality, political and methodical text, as well as teaching and methodical materials. Particular attention is to be directed to the formulation and distribution of a Soviet text for the peasantry, which would be of the greatest cultural and political significance, and also to the preparation and publication of a series of texts on political and social matters for mass use in urban and rural schools. While the principle of state monopoly on the publication of educational materials is to be preserved, other major soviet-party publishing houses are to be invited to publish such materials in co-operation with the state publishing houses of the union republics.

In order to further the self-education both of non-party workers and of worker-communists, the establishment of suitable libraries and the publication of books of the 'home university' type is to be intensified.

The party's leadership of critical and bibliographical work in our newspapers, magazines, and publishing houses is to be intensified, with permanent and systematically functioning sections being organized in the newspapers and special attention being devoted to mass editions and problems of party education.

19. In artistic literature the party's basic task must be oriented toward the creativity of workers and peasants who are becoming worker and peasant writers through the process of the cultural advance of the broad national masses of the Soviet Union. Worker and peasant correspondents must be viewed as reserves from which new worker and peasant writers will come forward.

There must be an overall increase in the material support for, and promotion of, proletarian and peasant writers who have come to our literature in part from production and the plow and in part from the stratum of intelligentsia which in the October days and during the era of War Communism entered the ranks of the RKP and the Komsomol.

Particular attention must be paid to writers and poets from the Komsomol, who are active in the very midst of the working-class youth.

The primary prerequisite for the growth of worker and peasant writers is their release from narrow clannishness in order to work more seriously on themselves, both artistically and politically, with the party—and particularly the party's literary critics—giving them all possible encouragement.

At the same time it is necessary to continue the existing systematic support of the most gifted of the so-called fellow-travelers who are being trained in the school of comradely work together with Communists. The party must organize firm criticism which, while singling out and supporting talented Soviet writers, at the same time points out their errors, which derive from an inadequate understanding of the Soviet order, and induces them to overcome bourgeois prejudices.

While considering that no one literary trend, school, or group can or should speak for the party, the Congress stresses the necessity of settling the problem of literary criticism and of the fullest possible explanation by the party of the standards of artistic literature on the pages of the soviet party press.

The Congress directs particular attention to the necessity of creating a mass artistic literature for the workers, peasants, and Red Army men.

20. The increasing significance of the press and the increasingly complex demands of readers compel party organs to make the most attentive and painstaking selection of persons for the mass press from among comrades who possess sufficient authority, are steady in party matters, and possess good workmanlike sense. The transfer of party member journalists to press work must be continued.

In electing party committees, especially in industrial centers, comrades must be selected who are capable of guiding the work of the most important local press organ. The systematic training of new staff from among the worker and peasant correspondents must also be intensified, especially through the State Institute of Journalism which must be strengthened

by party journalists. Particular attention must be directed to the training of workers for the nationality presses.

The party organs must also make a painstaking selection of the leading, especially editorial, staff of the major local publishers with the aim of strengthening and consolidating them.

21. The increased significance of the press as a means of binding the party to the masses requires the setting up and strengthening of organs of press guidance, the intensification of party supervision and leadership through the press sections and subsections of party committees and through the party committees as a whole. The party committees must take a closer interest in the solution of all basic problems of press guidance, including such problems in their work plans. The consolidation of the supervision and guidance of newspapers and publishers, in particular, demands a consolidation of the press sections of the oblast committees, the national central committees, and of the Central Committee bureau.

22. It is necessary to change to a system of oblast and krai party magazines oriented toward the middle peasant party member, with a number of the guberniia party magazines being converted into small party bulletins. The party-educational guiding character of party magazines is to be strengthened, and they are to explain, in addition to problems of leninism and of intra-party life and practice, also questions of economic and cultural construction, primarily using local materials and experience.

23. Through the press sections and subsections at the center and at the local level, a firm policy must be followed of liquidating all varieties of departmental literature with the aim of releasing corresponding resources for the support of the peasant and nationality press. State expenditures on departmental literature are to be rigidly reduced.

McNeal/Gregor, 233-240.



## TROTSKY, LITERATURE AND REVOLUTION

29 July 1924

*As part of his general writing about culture and as part of the larger debate about the value of past culture and the possibility of a "proletarian culture," Trotsky wrote a series of essays on literature and the arts which were published as the book Literature and Revolution. In it he argued against the idea of a "proletarian culture" or "proletarian literature," on the grounds that the period of the proletarian dictatorship was temporary and transitional and that a proletarian culture would not really have time to develop before evolving into a truly classless and human culture (and society). During this period the main task was the raise the educational and cultural levels of the workers and peasants; what actual art and literature were created during this period was less important. The Party was not disinterested in the latter, he argued, but it protected against ideas harmful to the revolution and delineated the framework of art rather than directing it in detail. Parts of the work were first published in Pravda in 1923, and the first Russian edition was published in 1923, with an enlarged Russian edition published in 1924. The edition used here has an "Introduction" dated 29 July 1924, which contains some of Trotsky's most succinct expressions of his ideas. See also his writings on culture earlier in this volume. This selection is sharply abridged.*

Leon Trotsky  
*Literature and Revolution*

INTRODUCTION

The place of art can be determined by the following general argument.

If the victorious Russian proletariat had not created its own army, the Workers' State would have been dead long ago, and we would not be thinking now about economic problems, and much less about intellectual and cultural ones.

If the dictatorship of the proletariat should prove incapable, in the next few years, of organizing its economic life and of securing at least a living minimum of material comforts for its population, then the proletarian regime will inevitably turn to dust. The economic problem at present is the problem above all problems.

But even a successful solution of the elementary problems of food, clothing, shelter, and even of literacy, would in no way signify a complete victory of the new historic principle, that is, of Socialism. Only a movement of scientific thought on a national scale and the development of a new art would signify that the historic seed has not only grown into a plant, but has even flowered. In this sense, the development of art is the highest test of the vitality and significance of each epoch.

Culture feeds on the sap of economics, and a material surplus is necessary, so that culture may grow, develop and become subtle. Our bourgeoisie laid its hand on literature, and did this very quickly at the time when it was growing rich. The proletariat will be able to prepare the formation of a new, that is, a Socialist culture and literature, not by the laboratory method on the basis of our present-day poverty, want and illiteracy, but by large social, economic and cultural means. Art needs comfort, even abundance. Furnaces have to be hotter, wheels have to move faster, looms have to turn more quickly, schools have to work better.

Our old literature and "culture" were the expressions of the nobleman and the bureaucrat, and were based on the peasant. The nobleman who did not doubt himself as well as the "repentant nobleman" laid their imprints upon the most significant period of Russian literature. Later the intellectual-commoner arose, based on the peasant and bourgeois, and he, too, wrote his chapter into the history of Russian literature. After going through a period of fullest "simplification" [of leading the simple life of the people] the intellectual-commoner became modernized, differentiated and individualized, in the bourgeois sense of the term. Here lies the role of the Decadent and Symbolic schools. Already at the beginning of the century, but especially after 1907-1908, the rebirth of the bourgeois intelligentsia and its literature proceeds at full speed. The War made this process end patriotically.

The Revolution overthrew the bourgeoisie, and this decisive fact burst into literature. The literature which was formed around a bourgeois center, is no more. Everything more or less vital, which remained in the field of culture, and this is especially true of literature, tried, and still tries, to find a new orientation. In view of the fact that the bourgeoisie no longer exists, its center can be only the people, without the bourgeoisie. But who are the people? First of all, they are the peasantry, and to some extent the small burghers of the city, and after that those workers who cannot be separated from the protoplasm of peasant and folk. This is the basic approach of all the "fellow-travelers" of the Revolution. So thought the late Blok. Thus Pilnyak, the "Serapion Fraternity", the Imagists, who are still alive and doing well. Thus some of the Futurists (Khlebnikov, Kruchenikh and V. Kamensky). The peasant basis of our culture—or rather, of our lack of culture—reveals indirectly all its strength.

Our revolution is the expression of the peasant turned proletarian, who yet leans upon the peasant and lays out the path to be followed. Our art is the expression of the intellectual, who hesitates between the peasant and the proletarian and who is incapable organically

of merging either with one or the other, but who gravitates more towards the peasant, because of his intermediary position, and because of his connections. He cannot become a peasant, but he can sing the peasant. At the same time, however, there can be no revolution without the leadership of the worker. That is the source of the fundamental contradiction at the very approach to the subject. One can say that the poets and writers of these sharply critical years differ from one another in the way they escape from this contradiction, and in the manner in which they fill in the gaps; one with mysticism, another with romanticism, a third with cautious aloofness, and a fourth with a cry which drowns everything. Regardless of the variety of methods of overcoming the contradiction, its essence remains one and the same. It consists in the separation created by bourgeois society of intellectual work, including art, from physical work, and it appears that the Revolution is the work of men doing physical work. One of the ultimate aims of the Revolution is to overcome completely the separation of these two kinds of activity. In this sense, as in all other senses, the problem of creating a new art proceeds entirely along the lines of the fundamental problem of constructing a Socialist culture.

It is silly, absurd, stupid to the highest degree, to pretend that art will remain indifferent to the convulsions of our epoch. The events are prepared by people, they are made by people, they fall upon people and change these people. Art, directly or indirectly, affects the lives of the people who make or experience the events. This refers to all art, to the grandest, as well as to the most intimate. If nature, love or friendship had no connection with the social spirit of an epoch, lyric poetry would long ago have ceased to exist. A profound break in history, that is, a rearrangement of classes in society, shakes up individuality, establishes the perception of the fundamental problems of lyric poetry from a new angle, and so saves art from eternal repetition.

But does not the "spirit" of an epoch work imperceptibly and independently of the subjective will? Of course in the final analysis, this spirit is reflected in everybody, in those who accept it and who embody it, as well as in those who hopelessly struggle against it, and in those who passively try to hide from it. But those who hide themselves passively are imperceptibly dying off. Those who resist are able to revive the old art with one kind of antiquated flame or another. But the new art, which will lay out new landmarks, and which will expand the channel of creative art, can be created only by those who are at one with their epoch. If a line were extended from present art to the Socialist art of the future, one would say that we have hardly now passed through the stage of even preparing for its preparation.

A short outline of the groups of present-day Russian literature is as follows:

Non-revolutionary literature, from the *feuilleton* writers in Suvorin's newspaper to the subtlest lyricists of the aristocrat's vale of tears, is dying, together with the classes which it served. Genealogically, as far as form is concerned, it represents the completion of the elder line of our old literature, which began as a nobleman's literature, and finished as bourgeois literature from beginning to end.

The "Soviet" rustic or peasant-singing literature can trace its genealogy, in the sense of form, though less clearly, from the Slavophil and populist tendencies of the old literature. To be sure, the peasant-singing writers are not directly the product of the peasant. They would be unthinkable without the preceding literature of the nobility and the bourgeoisie, the junior line of which they represent. At present, they are all adjusting themselves to be more in tune with the new social situation.

Futurism also undoubtedly represents an off-shoot of the old literature. But Russian Futurism did not reach its full development under the old literature, and did not undergo the necessary bourgeois transformation which would have given it official recognition. When the War and the Revolution began, Futurism was still Bohemian, which is a normal condition for every new literary school in capitalistic cities. Under the impulse of events, Futurism directed its development into the new channels of the Revolution. In the very

nature of the thing, this could not and did not result in a revolutionary art. But though remaining, in some respects, a Bohemian revolutionary off-shoot of the old art, Futurism contributes to a greater degree and more directly and actively than all other tendencies, in forming the new art.

However significant the achievement of individual proletarian poets may be in general, their so-called "proletarian art" is only passing through an apprenticeship. It sows the elements of artistic culture widely, it helps a new class to assimilate the old achievements, even though in a very thin veneer, and in this way it is one of the currents of the Socialist art of the future.

It is fundamentally incorrect to contrast bourgeois culture and bourgeois art with proletarian culture and proletarian art. The latter will never exist, because the proletarian regime is temporary and transient. The historic significance and the moral grandeur of the proletarian revolution consist in the fact that it is laying the foundations of a culture which is above classes and which will be the first culture that is truly human.

Our policy in art, during a transitional period, can and must be to help the various groups and schools of art which have come over to the Revolution to grasp correctly the historic meaning of the Revolution, and to allow them complete freedom of self-determination in the field of art, after putting before them the categorical standard of being for or against the Revolution.

The Revolution is reflected in art, for the time being only partially so, to the extent to which the artist ceases to regard it as an external catastrophe, and to the extent to which the guild of new and old poets and artists becomes a part of the living tissue of the Revolution and learns to see it from within and not from without.

The social whirlpool will not calm down so soon. There are decades of struggle ahead of us, in Europe and in America. Not only the men and women of our generation but of the coming one, will be its participants, its heroes and its victims. The art of this epoch will be entirely under the influence of revolution. This art needs a new self-consciousness. It is, above all, incompatible with mysticism whether it be frank, or whether it masquerades as romanticism, because the Revolution starts from the central idea that collective man must become sole master, and that the limits of his power are determined by his knowledge of natural forces and by his capacity to use them. This new art is incompatible with pessimism, with skepticism, and with all the other forms of spiritual collapse. It is realistic, active, vitally collectivist, and filled with a limitless creative faith in the Future....

## CHAPTER VI

### PROLETARIAN CULTURE AND PROLETARIAN ART

Every ruling class creates its own culture, and consequently, its own art. History has known the slave-owning cultures of the East and of classic antiquity, the feudal culture of medieval Europe and the bourgeois culture which now rules the world. It would follow from this that the proletariat has also to create its own culture and its own art.

The question, however, is not as simple as it seems at first glance. Society in which slave-owners were the ruling class, existed for many, many centuries. The same is true of Feudalism. Bourgeois culture, if one were to count only from the time of its open and turbulent manifestation, that is, from the period of the Renaissance, has existed five centuries, but it did not reach its greatest flowering until the nineteenth century, or, more correctly, the second half of it. History shows that the formation of a new culture which centers around a ruling class demands considerable time and reaches completion only at the period preceding the political decadence of that class.

Will the proletariat have enough time to create a "proletarian" culture? In contrast to the regime of the slave-owners and of the feudal lords and of the bourgeoisie, the proletariat regards its dictatorship as a brief period of transition. When we wish to denounce the all-too-optimistic views about the transition to Socialism, we point out that the period of



the social revolution, on a world scale, will last not months and not years, but decades—decades, but not centuries, and certainly not thousands of years. Can the proletariat in this time create a new culture. It is legitimate to doubt this, because the years of social revolution will be years of fierce class struggles in which destruction will occupy more room than new construction. At any rate, the energy of the proletariat itself will be spent mainly in conquering power, in retaining and strengthening it and in applying it to the most urgent needs of existence and of further struggle. The proletariat, however, will reach its highest tension and the fullest manifestation of its class character during this revolutionary period and it will be within such narrow limits that the possibility of planful, cultural reconstruction will be confined. On the other hand, as the new regime will be more and more protected from political and military surprises and as the conditions for cultural creation will become more favorable, the proletariat will be more and more dissolved into a Socialist community and will free itself from its class characteristics and thus cease to be a proletariat. In other words, there can be no question of the creation of a new culture, that is, of construction on a large historic scale during the period of dictatorship. The cultural reconstruction which will begin when the need of the iron clutch of a dictatorship unparalleled in history will have disappeared, will not have a class character. This seems to lead to the conclusion that there is no proletarian culture and that there never will be any and in fact there is no reason to regret this. The proletariat acquires power for the purpose of doing away forever with class culture and to make way for human culture. We frequently seem to forget this.

The formless talk about proletarian culture, in antithesis to bourgeois culture, feeds on the extremely uncritical identification of the historic destinies of the proletariat with those of the bourgeoisie. A shallow and purely liberal method of making analogies of historic forms has nothing in common with Marxism. There is no real analogy between the historic development of the bourgeoisie and of the working class....

Does that mean that the Party, quite in opposition to its nature, occupies a purely eclectic position in the field of art? This argument, which seems so crushing, is, in reality, extremely childish. The Marxist method affords an opportunity to estimate the development of the new art, to trace all its sources, to help the most progressive tendencies by a critical illumination of the road, but it does not do more than that. Art must make its own way and by its own means. The Marxist methods are not the same as the artistic. The Party leads the proletariat but not the historic processes of history. There are domains in which the Party leads, directly and imperatively. There are domains in which it only cooperates. There are, finally, domains in which it only orientates itself. The domain of art is not one in which the Party is called upon to command. It can and must protect and help it, but it can only lead it indirectly. It can and must give the additional credit of its confidence to various art groups, which are striving sincerely to approach the Revolution and so help an artistic formulation of the Revolution. And at any rate, the Party cannot and will not take the position of a literary circle which is struggling and merely competing with other literary circles. The Party stands guard over the historic interests of the working class in its entirety. Because it prepares consciously and step by step the ground for a new culture and therefore for a new art, it regards the literary fellow-travelers not as the competitors of the writers of the working-class, but as the real or potential helpers of the working-class in the big work of reconstruction. The Party understands the episodic character of the literary groups of a transition period and estimates them, not from the point of view of the class passports of the individual gentlemen literati, but from the point of view of the place which these groups occupy and can occupy in preparing a Socialist culture. If it is not possible to determine the place of any given group today, then the Party as a Party will wait patiently and gracefully. Individual critics or readers may sympathize with one group or another in advance. The Party, as a whole, protects the historic interests of the working class and must be more objective and wise. Its caution must be double-edged. If the Party

does not put its stamp of approval on the "Kuznitsa", just because workers write for it, it does not, in advance, repel any given literary group, even from the intelligentsia, in so far as such a group tries to approach the Revolution and tries to strengthen one of its links—a link is always a weak point—between the city and the village, or between the Party member and the non-partisan, or between the intelligentsia and the workers.

Does not such a policy mean, however, that the Party is going to have an unprotected flank on the side of art? This is a great exaggeration. The Party will repel the clearly poisonous, disintegrating tendencies of art and will guide itself by its political standards. It is true, however, that it is less protected on the flank of art than on the political front. But is this not true of science also? What are the metaphysicians of a purely proletarian science going to say about the theory of relativity? Can it be reconciled with materialism, or can it not? Has this question been decided? Where and when and by whom? It is clear to anyone, even to the uninitiated, that the work of our physiologist, Pavlov, is entirely along materialist lines. But what is one to say about the psycho-analytic theory of Freud? Can it be reconciled with materialism, as, for instance, Karl Radek thinks (and I also), or is it hostile to it? The same question can be put to all the new theories of atomic structure, etc., etc. It would be fine if a scientist would come along who could grasp all these new generalizations methodologically and introduce them into the dialectic materialist conception of the world. He could thus, at the same time, test the new theories and develop the dialectic method deeper. But I am very much afraid that this work—which is not like a newspaper or journalistic article, but a scientific and philosophic landmark, just as the "Origin of Species" and "Capital"—will not be created either today or tomorrow, or rather, if such an epoch-making book were created today, it would risk remaining uncut until the time when the proletariat will be able to lay aside its arms.

But does not the work of culture-bearing, that is, the work of acquiring the ABC of pre-proletarian culture, presuppose criticism, selection and a class standard? Of course it does. But the standard is a political one and not an abstract cultural one. The political standard coincides with the cultural one only in the broad sense that the Revolution creates conditions for a new culture. But this does not mean that such a coinciding is secured in every given case. If the Revolution has the right to destroy bridges and art monuments whenever necessary, it will stop still less from laying its hand on any tendency in art which, no matter how great its achievement in form, threatens to disintegrate the revolutionary environment or to arouse the internal forces of the Revolution, that is, the proletariat, the peasantry and the intelligentsia, to a hostile opposition to one another. Our standard is, clearly, political, imperative and intolerant. But for this very reason, it must define the limits of its activity clearly. For a more precise expression of my meaning, I will say: we ought to have a watchful revolutionary censorship, and a broad and flexible policy in the field of art, free from petty partisan maliciousness.

It is quite evident that the Party cannot, not for one day, follow the liberal principle of *laissez faire* and *laissez passer*, even in the field of art. The question is only at what point should interference begin, and what should be its limits; in which case and between what should the Party choose....

## CHAPTER VIII

### REVOLUTIONARY AND SOCIALIST ART

When one speaks of revolutionary art, two kinds of artistic phenomena are meant: the works whose themes reflect the Revolution, and the works which are not connected with the Revolution in theme, but are thoroughly imbued with it, and are colored by the new consciousness arising out of the Revolution. These are phenomena which quite evidently belong, or could belong, in entirely different planes. Alexey Tolstoi, in his "The Road to Calvary", describes the period of the War and the Revolution. He belongs to the peaceful Yasnaya Polyana school, only his scale is infinitely smaller and his point of view narrower.

And when he applies it to events of the greatest magnitude, it serves only as a cruel reminder that Yasnaya Polyana has been and is no more. But when the young poet, Tikhonov, without writing about the Revolution, writes about a little grocery store (he seems to be shy about writing of the Revolution), he perceives and reproduces its inertia and immobility with such fresh and passionate power as only a poet created by the dynamics of a new epoch can do. Thus if works about the Revolution and works of revolutionary art are not one and the same thing, they still have a point in common. The artists that are created by the Revolution cannot but want to speak of the Revolution. And, on the other hand, the art which will be filled with a great desire to speak of the Revolution, will inevitably reject the Yasnaya Polyana point of view, whether it be the point of view of the Count or of the peasant.

There is no revolutionary art as yet. There are the elements of this art, there are hints and attempts at it, and, what is most important, there is the revolutionary man, who is forming the new generation in his own image and who is more and more in need of this art. How long will it take for such art to reveal itself clearly? It is difficult even to guess, because the process is intangible and incalculable, and we are limited to guesswork even when we try to time more tangible social processes. But why should not this art, at least its first big wave, come soon as the expression of the art of the young generation which was born in the Revolution and which carries it on?

Revolutionary art which inevitably reflects all the contradictions of a revolutionary social system, should not be confused with Socialist art for which no basis has as yet been made. On the other hand, one must not forget that Socialist art will grow out of the art of this transition period.

In insisting on such a distinction, we are not at all guided by a pedantic consideration of an abstract program. Not for nothing did Engels speak of the Socialist Revolution as a leap from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom. The Revolution itself is not as yet the kingdom of freedom. On the contrary, it is developing the features of "necessity" to the greatest degree. Socialism will abolish class antagonisms, as well as classes, but the Revolution carries the class struggle to its highest tension. During the period of revolution, only that literature which promotes the consolidation of the workers in their struggle against the exploiters is necessary and progressive. Revolutionary literature cannot but be imbued with a spirit of social hatred, which is a creative historic factor in an epoch of proletarian dictatorship. Under Socialism, solidarity will be the basis of society. Literature and art will be tuned to a different key. All the emotions which we revolutionaries, at the present time, feel apprehensive of naming—so much have they been worn thin by hypocrites and vulgarians—such as disinterested friendship, love for one's neighbor, sympathy, will be the mighty ringing chords of Socialist poetry....

Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution*: 9-15, 184-186, 218-221, 228-230.



AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE USSR AND THE AUTONOMOUS  
GOVERNMENT OF THE THREE EASTERN PROVINCES OF CHINA  
20 September 1924

*The following treaty further defined the terms of joint ownership of the Chinese Eastern Railroad which had been agreed to in the Agreement between China and the USSR signed*

earlier in the year (see above, 31 May 1924). Control of the railroad continued to be a contentious issue between the two countries, however, until an additional agreement was signed in December 1924. See also the following document.

*Agreement between the Autonomous Government of the three Eastern Provinces of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the Promotion of Friendly Relations and the Settlement of Pending Questions.*

Mukden, September 20, 1924.

The Autonomous Government of the three Eastern Provinces of the Republic of China and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, desiring to promote friendly relations and to adjust the various problems concerning mutual rights and privileges have agreed to conclude an agreement and have named as their Plenipotentiaries, that is to say:

The Autonomous Government of the three Eastern Provinces of the Republic of China: Cheng Chien, Lu Jung Huan and Chung Shih Ming;

The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Kuznetsov;

Who, having communicated to one another their respective full powers, found to be in good and due form, have agreed upon the following articles:

ARTICLE 1. *The Chinese Eastern Railway.* The Governments of the two contracting parties agree to settle the question of the Chinese Eastern Railway as follows:

(1) The Governments of the two contracting parties declare that the Chinese Eastern Railway is a purely commercial enterprise.

The Governments of the two contracting parties mutually declare that, with the exception of matters pertaining to the business operations which are under the direct control of the said railway, all other matters affecting the rights of the national and the local Governments of the Republic of China—such as judicial matters, matters relating to civil administration, military administration, police, municipal government, taxation and landed property (with the exception of lands required by the said railway itself)—shall be administered by the Chinese authorities.

(2) That part of this agreement which pertains to the Chinese Eastern Railway shall cease to have effect as soon as an agreement has been reached between the two contracting parties in regard to the redemption by China of this railway, or upon the expiration of the period mentioned in item 13 of Article 1 of this agreement, when the railway will be returned to China.

(3) With the exception of the estimates and budgets, as provided in item 4 of Article 1 of this agreement, all other matters on which the board of directors cannot reach an agreement shall be referred for settlement by amicable and equitable methods to the Governments of the two contracting parties

(4) The board of directors shall present the estimates and budgets of the railway to a joint meeting of the board of directors and the board of auditors for considerations and approval.

(5) The two contracting parties agree that the future of the Chinese Eastern Railway shall be determined by the Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to the exclusion of any third party or parties.

(6) The contract of the 27th/28th September, 1896, for the construction and operation of the Chinese Eastern Railway shall be revised within 4 months after the signing of this agreement, by a commission to be appointed by the two contracting parties, in accordance with the articles herein contained. Until the said contract is revised, the rights of the two Governments arising therefrom, which do not conflict with this agreement nor prejudice China's rights of sovereignty, shall be maintained.

(7) The railway shall establish a board of auditors to be composed of 5 persons, namely, two Chinese auditors, who shall be appointed by the Republic of China, and three Russian

auditors, who shall be appointed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The chairman of the board of auditors shall be elected from among the Chinese auditors.

(8) The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees to the settlement of the question of the indebtedness of the Chinese Eastern Railway Company by a commission to be appointed by the two contracting parties, in accordance with item 4 of Article 9 of the Sino-Russian agreement on general principles, signed at Peking on the 31st May, 1924.

(9) All the net profits of the railway shall be held by the board of directors, and shall not be used before the question as to how to divide these profits between the two contracting parties is settled by a commission to be appointed by the two Governments.

(10) The board of directors shall revise as soon as possible the statutes of the Chinese Eastern Railway Company, approved on the 4th December, 1896, by the former Russian Government, in accordance with this agreement, and, in any case, not later than 4 months from the date of the constitution of the board of directors. Pending their revision, the said statutes, in so far as they do not conflict with this agreement and do not prejudice the rights of sovereignty of the Republic of China, shall continue to be observed.

(11) The chiefs and assistant chiefs of the various departments of the railway shall be appointed by the board of directors. If the chief of department is a national of the Republic of China, the assistant chief shall be a national of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and if the chief of the department is a national of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the assistant chief shall be a national of the Republic of China.

(12) The employment of persons in the various departments of the railway shall be in accordance with the principle of equal representation between the nationals of the Republic of China and those of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Note. In carrying out the aforesaid principle of equal representation, the regular operation of the railway and the progress of its affairs shall in no wise be hampered and hindered; that is, the appointment of officers of both nationalities shall be governed by the consideration of their experience, character and qualifications.

(13) The concession period of 80 years mentioned in Article 12 of the contract of the 27th August/8th September, 1896, for the construction and operation of the Chinese Eastern Railway shall be reduced to 60 years, upon the expiration of which the line, with all its appurtenances, will pass free of charge to the Chinese Government.

The question of further reducing the aforementioned period of 60 years may be taken up for consideration with the approval of the two contracting parties.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees, upon the signing of this agreement, to the redemption by China of the said railway with Chinese capital, the actual and fair cost of which to be fixed by the contracting parties.

(14) The railway shall have a manager, who shall be a national of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and two assistant managers, one to be a national of the Republic of China and the other to be a national of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The said officers shall be appointed by the board of directors, and such appointments shall be confirmed by their respective Governments.

The rights and duties of the manager and the assistant managers shall be defined by the board of directors.

(15) The railway shall establish, as a body conducting discussion and exercising decision, a board of directors, to be composed of 10 persons, of whom 5 shall be appointed by the Republic of China and 5 by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Republic of China shall appoint one of the Chinese directors as president of the board of directors, who shall also be the director-general, while the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall appoint one of the Russian directors as vice-president of the board of directors, who shall also be the assistant director-general.

Seven persons shall constitute a quorum, and all decisions of the board of directors shall have the consent of not less than 6 persons before they can be carried out.

The director-general and assistant director-general shall jointly manage the affairs of the board of directors, and they shall both sign all the documents of the board.

In the absence of either the director-general or the assistant director-general, their respective Governments may appoint another director to officiate as the director-general or the assistant director-general (in the case of director-general, by one of the Chinese directors, and in that of the assistant director-general, by one of the Russian directors).

ARTICLE 2. *Propaganda*. The two contracting parties mutually pledge themselves not to permit, within their respective territories, the existence and/or activities of any organizations or groups whose aim is to struggle by acts of violence against the Governments of either contracting party.

The two contracting parties further pledge themselves not to engage in propaganda directed against the political and social systems of either contracting party.

ARTICLE 3. *Rights of Navigation*. The two contracting parties agree to settle the question relating to navigation by their respective ships of all kinds, of rivers, lakes and other bodies of water which are common to their respective frontiers, on the basis of equality and reciprocity, the details of which questions shall be fully regulated within 2 months after the signing of the agreement by a commission to be appointed by the two contracting parties.

Inasmuch as the passenger and freight traffic on the Lower Amur down to its mouth and on the Sungari up to Harbin are questions concerning momentous privileges on the part of the Republic of China and on that of the Union Soviet Socialist Republics respectively, the two contracting parties agree to authorize the said commission to discuss these questions with a view to preserving their respective privileges in accordance with the principles of equality and reciprocity.

ARTICLE 4. *Constitution of Commissions*. The various commissions provided in the foregoing articles shall begin to officiate within one month after the signing of this agreement, and all questions shall be settled by them as soon as possible, and, in any case, except where time has been fixed in the foregoing articles, not later than 6 months.

ARTICLE 5. *Demarcation of Boundaries*. The two contracting parties agree to re-demarcate their national boundaries by a commission to be appointed by them, and pending such re-demarcation, to maintain the present boundaries.

ARTICLE 6. *Commercial Treaty and Customs Tariff*. The two contracting parties agree to the drawing up of a commercial treaty and a customs tariff, on the basis of equality and reciprocity, by a commission to be appointed by the two governments.

ARTICLE 7. *Agreement coming into Effect*. This agreement shall come into effect from the date of signature. In witness thereof, the plenipotentiaries of the two contracting parties have signed this agreement in duplicate, both in the Chinese, Russian and English languages, and have affixed their seals thereto. In case of disputes as to interpretation, the English text shall govern.

Done at the city of Mukden this 20th day of the 9th month of the 13th year of the Republic of China, which is the 20th day of September, 1924.

(L.S.) CHENG CHIEN.

(L.S.) LU JUNG HUAN.

(L.S.) CHUNG SHIH MING.

(L.S.) KUZNETZOV.

U. K. *British State and Foreign Papers, 1925, Part II, CXXII: 271-275.*



STATEMENT BY KARAKHAN REGARDING THE RETURN OF  
THE CHINESE-EASTERN RAILROAD TO THE SOVIET UNION

5 October 1924

*Although the Treaty between the Soviet Union and the three Eastern provinces of China authorized the return of the Chinese-Eastern Railroad to Soviet control, difficulties remained. The Mukden Agreement featured in Karakhan's statement to the press finalized the transfer of the railroad to Soviet hands, thus restoring a valuable asset which had been lost during the revolutionary process. See also the preceding document and the agreement of 31 May 1924, above.*

## [Statement by Karakhan to the Press]

For four months the agreement concerning the Chinese-Eastern Railway could not be carried out due to the refusal of Chang-Tso-Lin to recognize the agreement that was signed by the Chinese Government. I repeatedly called the attention of Mr. Wellington Koo, Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the fact that the situation was becoming intolerable, as the "Whites" continued to control the railroad and its rolling stock. On June 13 I declared to Mr. Wellington Koo that there were only two possibilities for the execution of the agreement, viz., either to force Chang-Tso-Lin to recognize that agreement, or the starting of direct negotiations between the U.S.S.R. and Chang-Tso-Lin with a view to concluding an agreement. Mr. Koo rejected the first method by declaring that the question would be settled by amiable negotiations. The Chinese Government sent its delegates to Mukden, but no results were obtained.

On August 10 I received new instructions from Moscow according to which I was to put this question squarely before the Chinese Government. At that time I again declared that the only course left to us would be to undertake direct negotiations with Chang-Tso-Lin. Mr. Koo promised to settle the matter in the course of a week, but more than a month elapsed without the Chinese Government being able to do anything.

The signing of the Mukden agreement is practically nothing else but the execution of the obligation which the Chinese Government had assumed, but which it was unable to carry out.

At present a new managing board of the railroad has been elected consisting of five Chinese and five representatives of the Soviet Government.

The restoration of the Soviet Union's title to the Chinese-Eastern Railway opens up broad vistas for economic and political collaboration with China. At present the Soviet Union is gaining a firm foothold in the Far East by occupying one of the most important positions of which its enemies were trying to deprive it.

In addition to the political, economic and other advantages, the Soviet Union has recuperated, on October 3, a property which according to the most conservative estimate is worth over half a billion gold rubles. The Soviet Union can consider the restitution of its title to the Chinese-Eastern railroad as one of the most remarkable instances of return of Soviet property that was seized by its enemies who hoped to use it against the workers and peasants of the U.S.S.R.

*Russian Review*, November 1, 1924: 175.



## THE "ZINOVIEV LETTER" AND RELATIONS WITH GREAT BRITAIN

24 October 1924

*Ramsey MacDonald's Labour Government, which had recognized the Soviet Union, fell in October 1924. During the election campaign the British press published a letter which was purported to be from Zinoviev, head of the Communist International, to British Communist leaders about plans for an uprising in Britain, including how to subvert the British Army. Soviet officials promptly denounced the letter as a forgery, and most Western specialists now also regard it as fraudulent, although the general tone was not out of line with recurrent Comintern attitudes. Nonetheless it had a strong impact in Britain, where anti-Soviet sentiment had been on the rise, and probably contributed to the overwhelming victory by the Conservative Party in the elections. The following is Prime Minister MacDonald's letter to Christian Rakovsky, the Soviet Ambassador in London, with the "Zinoviev Letter" enclosed. See also documents following, October 25, November 21 and 28. I.K.K.I. stands for the Executive Committee of the Communist International.*

*Mr. MacDonald to M. Rakovsky.  
Foreign Office, October 24, 1924.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to invite your attention to the enclosed copy of a letter which has been received by the Central Committee of the British Communist party from the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, over the signature of M. Zinoviev, its president, dated the 15th September. The letter contains instructions to British subjects to work for the violent overthrow of existing institutions in this country, and for the subversion of His Majesty's armed forces as a means to that end.

2. It is my duty to inform you that His Majesty's Government cannot allow this propaganda and must regard it as a direct interference from outside in British domestic affairs.

3. No one who understands the Constitution and the relationships of the Communist International will doubt its intimate connection and contact with the Soviet Government. No Government will ever tolerate an arrangement with a foreign Government by which the latter is in formal diplomatic relations of a correct kind with it, whilst at the same time a propagandist body organically connected with that foreign Government encourages and even orders subjects of the former to plot and plan revolutions for its overthrow. Such conduct is not only a grave departure from the rules of international comity, but a violation of specific and solemn undertakings repeatedly given to His Majesty's Government.

4. So recently as the 4th June of last year the Soviet Government made the following solemn agreement with His Majesty's Government:

"The Soviet Government undertakes not to support with funds or in any other form persons or bodies or agencies or institution whose aim is to spread discontent or to foment rebellion in any part of the British Empire...and to impress upon its officers and officials the full and continuous observance of these conditions."

5. Moreover, in the treaty which His Majesty's Government recently concluded with your Government, still further provision was made for the faithful execution of an analogous undertaking, which is essential to the existence of good and friendly relations between the two countries. His Majesty's Government mean that these undertakings shall be carried out both in the letter and in the spirit, and it cannot accept the contention that whilst the Soviet Government undertakes obligations, a political body, as powerful as itself, is to be allowed to conduct a propaganda and support it with money, which is in direct violation of the official agreement. The Soviet Government either has or has not the power to make such agreements. If it has the power, it is its duty to carry them out and see that the



other parties are not deceived. If it has not this power, and if responsibilities which belong to the State in other countries are in Russia in the keeping of private and irresponsible bodies, the Soviet Government ought not to make agreements which it knows it cannot carry out.

6. I should be obliged if you would be good enough to let me have the observations of your Government on this subject without delay.

I have, etc.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD

Enclosure

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, THIRD COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, PRESIDIUM.

To the Central Committee, British Communist Party.

(Very Secret.)

*Moscow, September 15, 1924.*

Dear Comrades,

The time is approaching for the Parliament of England to consider the treaty concluded between the Governments of Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. for the purpose of ratification. The fierce campaign raised by the British *bourgeoisie* around the questions shows that the majority of the same, together with reactionary circles, are against the treaty for the purpose of breaking off an agreement consolidating the ties between the proletariats of the two countries leading to the restoration of normal relations between England and the U.S.S.R.

The proletariat of Great Britain, which pronounced its weighty word when danger threatened of a break-off of the past negotiations and compelled the Government of MacDonald to conclude the treaty, must show the greatest possible energy in the further struggle for ratification and against the endeavours of British capitalists to compel Parliament to annul it.

It is indispensable to stir up the masses of the British proletariat, to bring into movement the army of unemployed proletarians, whose position can be improved only after a loan has been granted to the U.S.S.R. for the restoration of her economics and when business collaboration between the British and Russian proletariats has been put in order. It is imperative that the group in the Labour party sympathising with the treaty should bring increased pressure to bear upon the Government and parliamentary circles in favour of the ratification of the treaty.

Keep close observation over the leaders of the labour party, because these may easily be found in the leading strings of the *bourgeoisie*. The foreign policy of the Labour party as it is already represents an inferior copy of the policy of the Curzon Government. Organise a campaign of disclosures of the foreign policy of MacDonald.

The I.K.K.I. will willingly place at your disposal the wide material in its possession regarding the activities of British imperialism in the Middle and Far East. In the meanwhile, however, strain every nerve in the struggle for the ratification of the treaty, in favour of a continuation of negotiations regarding the regulation of relations between the U.S.S.R. and England. A settlement of relations between the two countries will assist in the revolutionising of the international and British proletariat not less than a successful rising in any of the working districts in England, as the establishment of close contact between the British and Russian proletariat, the exchange of delegations and workers, etc., will make it possible for us to extend and develop the propaganda of ideas of Leninism in England and the colonies. Armed warfare must be preceded by a struggle against the inclinations of compromise which are embedded among the majority of British workmen, against the ideas of evolution and peaceful extermination of capitalism. Only then will it be possible to count upon complete success of an armed insurrection. In Ireland and the

colonies the case is different; there is a national question, and this represents too great a factor for success for us to waste time on a prolonged preparation of the working class.

But even in England, as in other countries where the workers are politically developed, events themselves may more rapidly revolutionise the working masses than propaganda. For instance, a strike movement, repressions by the Government, etc.

From your last report it is evident that agitation-propaganda work in the army is weak, in the navy a very little better. Your explanation that the quality of the members attracted justifies the quantity is right in principle, nevertheless, it would be desirable to have cells in all the units of the troops, particularly among those quartered in the large centres of the country, and also among factories working on munitions and at military store depots. We request that the most particular attention be paid to these latter.

In the event of danger of war, with the aid of the latter and in contact with the transport workers, it is possible to paralyse all the military preparations of the *bourgeoisie* and to make a start in turning an imperialist war into a class war. Now more than ever we should be on our guard. Attempts at intervention in China show that world imperialism is still full of vigour and is once more making endeavours to restore its shaken position and cause a new war, which, as it objective, is to bring about the break-up of the Russian proletariat and the suppression of the budding world revolution, and, further, would lead to the enslavement of the colonial peoples. "Danger of War"; "The *Bourgeoisie* Seeks War, Capital Seeks Fresh Markets"—these are the slogans which you must familiarise the masses with, with which you must go to work into the mass of the proletariat. These slogans will open to you the doors of comprehension of the masses, will help you to capture them and march under the banner of Communism. [Preceding two sentences as in original publication—R.W.]

The military section of the British Communist party, so far as we are aware, further suffers from a lack of specialists, the future directors, of the British Red Army.

It is time you thought of forming such a group, which, together with the leaders, might be, in the event of an outbreak of active strife, the brain of the military organisation of the party.

Go attentively through the lists of the military "cells," detailing from them the more energetic and capable men; turn attention to the more talented military specialists who have, for one reason or another, left the service and hold Socialist views. Attract them into the ranks of the Communist party if they desire honestly to serve the proletariat and desire in the future to direct not the blind mechanical forces in the service of the *bourgeoisie*, but a national army.

Form a directing operative head of the military section.

Do not put this off to a future moment, which may be pregnant with events and catch you unprepared.

Desiring you all success, both in organisation and in your struggle,

With Communist greetings,

President of the Presidium of the I.K.K.I.,

ZINOVIEV.

Member of the Presidium,

McMANUS.

Kuusinen, *Secretary*.

U.K. *A Selection of Papers dealing with the Relations between His Majesty's Government and the Soviet Government, 1917-1927*, Cmd. 2895: 28-32.



## RAKOVSKY DENOUNCES THE "ZINOVIEV LETTER"

25 October 1924

*The Soviet ambassador quickly denied the validity of the "Zinoviev Letter." See the previous headnote regarding its authenticity and importance.*

*M. Rakovsky to Mr. MacDonald.*

*London, October 25, 1924.*

Sir,

I HAVE received the Foreign Office note of the 24th October, signed Mr. J. D. Gregory, to which I have the honour to make the following reply:

1. As recently as last year, after the settlement of the diplomatic conflict which took place in May, it was agreed between the representative of the Government of the Soviet Union in London and the Foreign Office, that, in the interests of the strengthening of friendly relations between the two countries, both parties would endeavour to settle by direct conversations any incidents which might arise, resorting to the despatch of notes only in the case of this friendly procedure failing to bring about a favorable result. After my arrival in London the Foreign Office personally confirmed that in the future we would adhere to this reasonable practice, which would remove avoidable misunderstandings and prevent future conflicts. By maintaining this rule we were able to liquidate in a friendly way a number of incidents affecting both countries. As an instance, I will mention the fact that my Government did not resort to a public protest and to creating conflict in connection with the extremely important incident bearing upon the most vital interests of the Union which arose as a result of the declaration made by the representative of the British Government, Professor Gilbert Murray, at the Conference of the League of Nations—a declaration which was in contradiction with our agreements of last year and with the provision of the new treaties of the 8th August concerning non-interference in our internal affairs, and which flagrantly violated the note of the British Government on the recognition of the Soviet Union.

2. To my great regret, the note which I received last night, in which absolutely unfounded accusations are made by the Foreign Office against the Soviet Government, at a moment when British opinion is concentrated upon the Anglo-Soviet treaties and the future relations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union, constitutes an unexpected violation of the procedure which we mutually agreed upon.

3. As regards the subject matter of Mr. Gregory's note, I declare in most categorical terms that the manifesto annexed to it is a gross forgery and an audacious attempt to prevent the development of friendly relations between the two countries. If, instead of departing from the established practice, the Foreign Office had in the first place approached me for an explanation, it would not have been difficult to convince them that they had been victims of deception on the part of the enemies of the Soviet Union. Not only the contents, but the heading and the signature of the document definitely prove that it is the work of malicious individuals who are inadequately familiar with the constitution of the Communist International. In circulars of the Communist International (which may be seen in the press, for its activities are not concealed) it is never described as the "Third Communist International"—for the simple reason that there has never been a First or a Second Communist International. The signature is a similarly clumsy forgery. M. Zinoviev is made to sign himself as the "President of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International," whereas actually his is, and always signs himself officially as "President of the Executive Committee." The whole of the contents of the documents are, moreover, from the Communist point of view, a tissue of absurdities, intended simply to arouse

British public opinion against the Soviet Union, and to frustrate the efforts being made by *both* countries to establish durable and friendly relations.

4. The evident falsity of this document relieves me of the necessity of replying to the conclusion drawn in the Foreign Office note as to the responsibility of the Soviet Government for the activities of the Communist International, since they are based on the assumption that the document is authentic.

5. I protest categorically against this using of false documents against the Soviet Union and also against the violation of the procedure mutually established for the consideration of all incidents which may arise between the two countries. At the same time I express my conviction that the British Government will take the necessary steps to investigate the authorship of this malicious attempt to create a conflict between the two Governments. This will ensure the possibility of preventing in future the recurrence of similar incidents.

I have, etc.

C. RAKOVSKY.

U.K. *A Selection of Papers dealing with the Relations between His Majesty's Government and the Soviet Government, 1917-1927*, Cmd. 2895: 32-33.



## TROTSKY—LESSONS OF OCTOBER

November 1924

*In the fall of 1924 Trotsky resumed his attack on the triumvirate of Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin by means of this essay, which was written in the form a preface to the third volume of his collected works, those dealing with 1917. The essay created an enormous storm and called forth the full efforts of the party leadership to condemn Trotsky and solidify their control of the Party and of doctrine; several of these are given below. Trotsky attempted to undermine Zinoviev (who he saw as his main rival and the leader of the triumvirate) by pointing out his failure to support the October seizure of power in 1917 while stressing his own central role. Moreover, he argued that only by properly understanding the lessons of party history in 1917 could the party leaders find the proper policies to follow later; he used the failure of the Communists to seize power in Germany in 1923 as a case in point. In defending themselves the triumvirate had to present their own views of 1917, and especially to attack not only Trotsky's role in the Revolution but his long history of opposition to Bolshevism before 1917 (see articles by Kamenev and Stalin below). The force of the leadership attacks on Trotsky, and especially their appeals to unity, is better understood in the context of other events taking place at this time such as the controversy with Great Britain surrounding the so-called "Zinoviev Letter"—see elsewhere in this volume. They disputed especially Trotsky's claims of closeness to Lenin. His argument that his own writings in America (where he was living) immediately after February 1917 were "in complete harmony with the analysis" given by Lenin in his "Letters from Afar" became a focus of attacks. In a sense Trotsky's article began the process of using the history of 1917—indeed, of rewriting it—to serve the policies and politics of the present. In some ways it marks the beginning of the official control over the falsification of history to serve party and state objectives. Readers should keep in mind that in this and the rejoinders, polemics and partisan advantage took precedence over historical accuracy. This essay was quite lengthy and is abridged, especially omitting a long section on the summer and early fall of 1917.*

Leon Trotsky

*The Lessons of October*

We Must Study the October Revolution

We met with success in the October revolution, but the October revolution has met with little success in our press. Up to the present time we lack a single work which gives a comprehensive picture of the October upheaval and which puts the proper stress upon its most important political and organizational aspects. Worse yet, even the available first-hand material—including the most important documents—directly pertaining to the various particulars of the preparation for the Revolution, or the Revolution itself, remains unpublished as yet. Numerous documents and considerable material have been issued bearing on the pre-October history of the revolution, and the pre-October history of the Party; we have also issued much material and many documents relating to the post-October period. But October itself has received far less attention. Having achieved the Revolution, we seem to have concluded that we should never have to repeat it. It is as if we thought that no immediate and direct benefit for the unpostponable tasks of future constructive work could be derived from the study of October, the actual conditions of the direct preparation for it; the actual accomplishment of it; and the work of consolidating it during the first few weeks.

Such an approach—though it may be subconscious—is, however, profoundly erroneous; and is, moreover, narrow and nationalistic. We ourselves may never have to repeat the experience of the October Revolution, but this does not at all imply that we have nothing to learn from that experience. We are a part of the International, and the workers in all other countries are still faced with the solution of the problem of their own “October.” Last year we had ample proof that the most advanced Communist parties of the West had not only failed to assimilate our October experience but were virtually ignorant of the actual facts.

To be sure, the objection may be raised that it is impossible to study October or even to publish documents relating to October without the risk of stirring up old disagreements. But such an approach to the question would be altogether petty. The disagreements of 1917 were indeed very profound, and they were not by any means accidental. But nothing could be more paltry than an attempt to turn them now, after a lapse of several years, into weapons of attack against those who were at that time mistaken. It would be, however, even more inadmissible to remain silent as regards the most important problems of the October Revolution, which are of international significance, or account of trifling personal considerations....

We have never made clear to ourselves what we accomplished and how we accomplished it. After October, in the flush of victory, it seemed as if the events of Europe would develop of their own accord and, moreover, within so brief a period as would leave no time for any theoretical assimilation of the lessons of October. But events have proved that without a party capable of directing the proletarian revolution, the revolution itself is rendered impossible. The proletariat cannot seize power by a spontaneous uprising....

We are all aware, of course, that every nation, every class and even every party learns primarily from the harsh blows of its own experience. But that does not in the least imply that the experience of other countries and classes and parties is of minor importance. Had we failed to study the great French Revolution, the Revolution of 1848, and the Paris Commune, we should never have been able to achieve the October Revolution, even though we passed through the experience of the year 1905. And, after all, we went through this “national” experience of ours basing ourselves on deductions from previous revolutions, and extending their historical line. Afterwards, the entire period of the counter-revolution was taken up with the study of the lessons to be learned and the deductions to be drawn from the year 1905. Yet, no such work has been done with regard to the victorious Revolution of 1917—no, not even a tenth part of it....

The fundamental instrument of proletarian revolution is the Party. On the basis of our experience—even taking only one year, from February 1917 to February 1918—and on the basis of the supplementary experience in Finland, Hungary, Italy, Bulgaria and Germany, we can posit as almost an unalterable law that a party crisis is inevitable in the transition from the preparatory revolutionary activity to the immediate struggle for power. Generally speaking, crises arise in the Party at every serious turn in the Party's course, either as a prelude to the turn or as a consequence of it. The explanation for this lies in the fact that every period in the development of the Party has special features of its own and calls for specific habits and methods of work. A tactical turn implies a greater or lesser break in these habits and methods. Herein lies the direct and most immediate root of internal party friction and crises. "It happens all too frequently," wrote Lenin in July 1917, "that when history makes an abrupt turn, even the most advanced parties are unable for a longer or a shorter period of time to adapt themselves to new conditions. They keep repeating the slogans of yesterday—slogans which were correct yesterday, but which have lost all their meaning today, becoming devoid of meaning 'suddenly,' with the self-same 'suddenness' that history makes its abrupt turn." Hence the danger arises that if the turn is too abrupt or too sudden, and if in the preceding period too many elements of inertia and conservatism have accumulated in the leading organs of the Party, then the Party proves itself unable to fulfil its leadership at that supreme and critical moment for which it has been preparing itself in the course of years or decades. The Party is ravaged by a crisis, and the movement passes the Party by—and heads towards defeat.

A revolutionary party is subjected to the pressure of other political forces. At every given stage of its development the Party elaborates its own methods of counteracting and resisting this pressure. During a tactical turn and the resulting internal regroupments and frictions, the Party's power of resistance becomes weakened. From this the possibility always arises that the internal groupings in the Party, which originate from the necessity of a turn in tactics, may develop far beyond the original controversial points of departure and serve as a support for various class tendencies. To put the case more plainly: the Party which does not keep step with the historical tasks of its own class becomes, or runs the risk of becoming, the indirect tool of other classes.

If what we said above is true of every serious turn in tactics, it is all the more true of great turns in strategy. By tactics, in politics, we understand, using the analogy of military science, the art of conducting isolated operations. By strategy, we understand the art of conquest, *i.e.*, the seizure of power. Prior to the war we did not, as a rule, make this distinction. In the epoch of the Second International we confined ourselves solely to the conception of social democratic tactics. Nor was this accidental. The social democracy applied parliamentary tactics, trade union tactics, municipal tactics, cooperative tactics, and so on. But the question of combining all forces and resources—all sorts of troops—to obtain victory over the enemy was really never raised in the epoch of the Second International, in so far as the practical task of the struggle for power was not raised. It was only the 1905 Revolution that first posed, after a long interval, the fundamental or strategical questions of proletarian struggle. By reason of this it secured immense advantages to the Russian revolutionary Social Democrats, *i.e.*, the Bolsheviks. The great epoch of revolutionary strategy began in 1917, first for Russia and afterwards for the rest of Europe. Strategy, of course, does not do away with tactics. The questions of the trade union movement, of parliamentary activity, and so on, do not disappear, but they now become invested with a new meaning as subordinate methods of a combined struggle for power. Tactics are subordinated to strategy.

If tactical turns usually lead to internal friction in the Party, how much deeper and fiercer must be the friction resulting from strategical turns! And the most abrupt of all turns

is the turn of the proletarian party from the work of preparation and propaganda, of organization and agitation, to the immediate struggle for power, to an armed insurrection against the bourgeoisie. Whatever remains in the Party that is irresolute, skeptical, conciliationist, capitulatory, in short, Menshevik—all this rises to the surface in opposition to the insurrection, seeks for theoretical formulas to justify its opposition and finds them ready-made in the arsenal of the opportunist opponents of yesterday. We shall have occasion to observe this phenomenon more than once in the future.

The final review and selection of party weapons on the eve of the decisive struggle took place during the interval from February to October [1917], on the basis of the widest possible agitational and organizational work among the masses. During and after October these weapons were tested in the fire of colossal historic actions. To undertake at the present time, several years after October, an appraisal of the different viewpoints concerning revolution in general, and the Russian Revolution in particular, and in so doing to evade the experience of 1917, is to busy oneself with barren scholasticism. That would certainly not be a Marxist political analysis. It would be analogous to wrangling over the advantages of various systems of swimming, while we stubbornly refused to turn our eyes to the river where swimmers were putting these systems into practice. No better test of viewpoints concerning revolution exists than the verification of how they worked out during the Revolution itself, just as a system of swimming is best tested when a swimmer jumps into the water.

“The Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat  
and the Peasantry”—in February and in October

THE course and the outcome of the October Revolution dealt a relentless blow to the scholastic parody of Marxism which was very widely spread among the Russian social democrats, beginning in part with the Emancipation of Labor Group and finding its most finished expression among the Mensheviks. The essence of this pseudo-Marxism consisted in perverting Marx's conditional and limited conception that “the country that is more developed industrially, only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future” into an absolute and (to use Marx's own expression) supra-historical law; and then, in seeking to establish upon the basis of that law the tactics of the proletarian party. Such a formulation naturally excluded even the mention of any struggle on the part of the Russian proletariat for the seizure of power until the more highly developed countries had set a “precedent.” There is, of course, no disputing that every backward country finds *some* traits of its own future in the history of advanced countries, but there cannot be any talk of a repetition of the development as a whole. On the contrary, the more capitalist economy acquired a world character, all the more strikingly original became the development of the backward countries which must necessarily combine the elements of their backwardness with the latest achievements of capitalist development. In his preface to *The Peasant War*, Engels wrote: “At a certain stage *which need not necessarily occur simultaneously everywhere or on the same level of development*, the bourgeoisie begins to note that its proletarian fellow-traveller has outgrown it.” The course of historical development constrained the Russian bourgeoisie to make this observation much earlier and more completely than the bourgeoisie of all other countries. Lenin, even prior to 1905, gave expression to the peculiar character of the Russian Revolution in the formula “the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.” This formula, in itself, as future development showed, could acquire meaning only as a stage towards the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry. Lenin's formulation of the problem, revolutionary and dynamic through and through, was completely and irreconcilably counterpoised to the Menshevik pattern, according to which Russia could pretend only to a repetition of the history of the advanced nations, with the bourgeoisie in power and the social democrats in opposition.

Some circles of our Party, however, laid the stress not upon the *dictatorship* of the proletariat and the peasantry in Lenin's formula, but upon its *democratic* character as opposed to its socialist character. And, again, this could only mean that in Russia, a backward country, only a democratic revolution was conceivable. The socialist revolution was to begin in the West; and we could take to the road of socialism only in the wake of England, France and Germany. But such a formulation of the question slipped inevitably into Menshevism, and this was fully revealed in 1917 when the tasks of the Revolution were posed before us, not for prognosis but for decisive action.

To hold, under the actual conditions of revolution, a position of supporting democracy, pushed to its logical conclusion, *opposing* Socialism as "*being premature*," meant, in politics, a shift from the proletariat to a petty bourgeois position. It meant going over to the position of the left wing of national revolution.

The February Revolution, if considered by itself, was a bourgeois revolution. But as a bourgeois revolution it came too late and was devoid of any stability. Torn asunder by contradictions which immediately found their expression in dual power, it had either to change into a direct prelude to the proletarian revolution—which is what actually did happen—or to throw Russia back into a semi-colonial existence, under some sort of a bourgeois-oligarchic regime. Consequently, the period following the February Revolution could be regarded from two points of view: either as a period of consolidating, developing or consummating the "democratic" revolution, or as a period of preparation for the proletarian revolution. The first point of view was held not only by the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries but also by a certain section of our own party leaders. With this difference, that the latter really tried to push the democratic evolution as far as possible to the left. But the method was essentially one and the same—to "exert pressure" on the ruling bourgeoisie, a "pressure" so calculated as to remain within the framework of the bourgeois democratic regime. If that policy had prevailed, the development of the Revolution would have passed over the head of our Party and, in the end, the insurrection of the worker and peasant masses would have taken place without party leadership; in other words, we would have had the repetition of the July days on a colossal scale, *i.e.*, this time not as an episode but as a catastrophe.

It is perfectly obvious that the immediate consequence of such a catastrophe would have been the physical destruction of our Party. This provides us with a measuring rod of how deep our differences of opinion were....

The problem of the conquest of power was put before the Party only after the 4th of April, that is, after the arrival of Lenin in Petrograd. But even after that moment, the political line of the Party did not by any means acquire a unified and an indivisible character, challenged by none. Despite the decisions of the April Conference in 1917, the opposition to the revolutionary course—sometimes hidden, sometimes open—pervaded the entire period of preparation.

The study of the trend of the disagreements between February and the consolidation of the October Revolution is not only of extraordinary theoretical, but of utmost practical importance. Lenin, in 1910, spoke of the disagreements at the Second Party Congress in 1903 as "anticipatory," *i.e.*, a forewarning. It is very important to trace these disagreements in a study beginning with their source, *i.e.*, 1903, or even at an earlier time, say beginning with "Economism." But such a study acquires a meaning only if it is carried to its logical conclusion and if it covers the period in which these disagreements were submitted to the decisive test, that is to say, the October period.

We cannot, within the limits of this preface, undertake to deal exhaustively with all the stages of this struggle. But we consider it indispensable at least partially to fill the deplorable gap in our literature with regard to the most important period in the development of our Party.



As has been already said, the disagreements centered round the question of power. Generally speaking, this is the touchstone whereby the character of the revolutionary party (and of other parties as well) is determined.

There is an intimate connection between the question of power and the question of war which was posed and decided in this period. We propose to consider these questions in chronological order, taking the outstanding landmarks: the position of the Party and of the party press in the first period after the overthrow of Tsarism and prior to the arrival of Lenin; the struggle around Lenin's theses; the April Conference; the aftermath of the July days; the Kornilov period; the Democratic Conference and the Pre-Parliament; the question of the armed insurrection and the seizure of power (September to October); and the question of a "homogenous" Socialist Government.

The study of these will, we believe, enable us to draw deductions of considerable importance to other parties in the Communist International.

### The Struggle Against War and Defenseism

THE overthrow of Tsarism in February 1917 signalized, of course, a gigantic leap forward. But if we take February within the limits of February alone, *i.e.*, if we take it not as a step towards October, then it meant no more than this: that Russia was approximating the type of bourgeois republic like, say, France. The petty bourgeois revolutionary parties, as is their wont, considered the February Revolution to be neither bourgeois nor a step towards a socialist revolution, but as some sort of self-sufficing "democratic" entity. And upon this they constructed the ideology of revolutionary defenseism. They were defending, if you please, not the rule of any one class but "revolution" and "democracy." But even in our own Party the revolutionary impetus of February engendered at first an extreme confusion of political perspectives. As a matter of fact, during the March days, *Pravda* held a position much closer to revolutionary defenseism than to the position of Lenin....

### On the Eve of the October Revolution; the Aftermath—

AN emergency Congress proved unnecessary. The pressure exerted by Lenin secured the requisite shift of forces to the left, both within the Central Committee as well as in our faction of the Pre-Parliament. The Bolsheviks withdrew from it on October 10. In Petrograd the Soviet clashed with the Government over the order transferring to the front the part of the garrison which sympathized with the Bolsheviks. On October 16, the Military Revolutionary Committee was created, the legal Soviet organ of insurrection. The right wing of the Party sought to retard the development of events. The struggle of tendencies within the Party, as well as the class struggle in the country, entered its decisive phase. The position of the Rights is best and most completely illumined in its principled aspects by a letter signed by Zinoviev and Kamenev and entitled, "On the Current Situation." The letter was written on October 11, that is, two weeks before the insurrection and it was sent to the most important party organizations. The letter comes out in decisive opposition to the resolution for an armed insurrection adopted by the Central Committee. Cautioning against underestimating the enemy while in reality monstrously underestimating the forces of revolution and even denying that the masses are in a mood for battle, (two weeks before October 25!) the letter states: "We are profoundly convinced that to declare for an immediate armed insurrection is to stake on a single throw of the dice that only the fate of our Party but also the fate of the Russian and International revolution." But if the insurrection and the seizure of power are out of the question, what then? The answer in the letter is also quite plain and precise: "In the army and in the workers we hold a pistol to the head of the bourgeoisie," and because of this pistol the bourgeoisie will be unable to quash the Constituent Assembly. "The prospects of our Party in the elections for the Constituent Assembly are excellent....The influence of Bolshevism is growing....With correct tactics, we can win a

third, yes and more than a third, of the seats in the Constituent Assembly." Thus, this letter openly steers a course towards our playing the role of an "influential" opposition in a bourgeois Constituent Assembly. This purely social democratic course is superficially camouflaged by the following consideration: "The Soviets, having sunk their roots deeply into our social existence, cannot be destroyed....The Constituent Assembly itself can base its revolutionary work only on the Soviets. The Constituent Assembly plus the Soviets—that is the combined type of state institutions toward which we are travelling." It is of extraordinary interest with regard to characterizing the entire line of the Rights that the theory of "combined" state forms, the correlation of the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets, was reiterated in Germany a year and a half or two years later by Rudolf Hilferding, who also waged a struggle against the seizure of power by the proletariat. The Austro-German opportunist was unaware that he was plagiarizing.

The letter, "On the Current Situation," refutes the assertion that the majority of the people in Russia were already supporting us, on the basis of a purely parliamentary estimate of this majority. "In Russia the majority of the workers are with us," the letter states, "and a considerable section of the soldiers. Everything else is doubtful. We are all, for instance, convinced that if elections to the Constituent Assembly were held, the majority of the peasants would vote for the S.R.'s. And is that accidental?"

The above formulation of the question contains the principal and fundamental error, flowing from a failure to understand that the peasants might have strong revolutionary interests and an intense urge to realize them, but cannot have an independent political position. They might either vote for the bourgeoisie by voting for its S.R. agency or join in action with the proletariat. Which one of these two possibilities would materialize hinged precisely upon the policy we pursued. Had we gone to the Pre-Parliament in order to constitute an influential opposition ("a third, yes and more than a third, of the seats") in the Constituent Assembly, then we would have almost automatically placed the peasantry in such a position as would have compelled it to seek the satisfaction of its interests through the Constituent Assembly; and, consequently, they would have looked not to the opposition but to the majority. On the other hand, the seizure of power by the proletariat immediately created the revolutionary framework for the struggle of the peasantry against the landlords and the officials....

We have characterized the nature of the political questions bound up with the preparation for the October Revolution, and we have attempted to clarify the gist of the differences that arouse; and now it remains for us to trace briefly the most important moments of the internal party struggle during the last decisive weeks.

The resolution for an armed insurrection was adopted by the Central Committee on October 10. On October 11, the letter, "On the Current Situation," analyzed above, was sent out to the most important party organizations. On October 18, that is, a week before the Revolution, *Novaya Zhizn* published the letter of Kamenev. "Not only Comrade Zinoviev and I," we read in this letter, "but also a number of practical comrades think that to assume the initiative of an armed insurrection at the present moment, with the given correlation of forces, independently of and several days before the Congress of the Soviets, is an inadmissible step ruinous to the proletariat and to the Revolution." (*Novaya Zhizn*, No. 156, October 18, 1917). On October 25, power was seized in Petrograd, and the Soviet Government was created. On November 4, a number of responsible party members resigned from the Central Committee of the Party and from the Council of People's Commissars, and issued an ultimatum demanding the formation of a coalition government composed of all Soviet parties. "...Otherwise," they wrote, "the only course that remains is to maintain a purely Bolshevik Government by means of political terror." And, in another document, issued at the same time: "We cannot assume any responsibility for this ruinous policy of the Central Committee which has been adopted contrary to the will of the great majority

of the proletariat and the soldiers who are longing for the quickest possible cessation of bloodshed between the different sections of democracy. For this reason we resign from our posts in the Central Committee in order to avail ourselves of the right to express our candid opinions to the masses of workers and soldiers and summon them to support our cry: 'Long live the Government of all Soviet parties!' Immediate conciliation on this basis!" ("The October Revolution," Archives of the Revolution, 1917, pp. 407-410). Thus, those who had opposed the armed insurrection and the seizure of power as an adventure, were demanding after the victorious conclusion of the insurrection, that the power be restored to those parties against whom the proletariat had to struggle in order to conquer power. And why, indeed, was the victorious Bolshevik Party obliged to restore power to the Mensheviks and the S.R.'s (and it was precisely the restoration of power that was in question here!). To this the opposition replied: "We consider that the creation of such a government is necessary for the sake of preventing further bloodshed; an imminent famine; the crushing of the Revolution by Kaledin and his cohorts; and in order to insure the convocation of the Constituent Assembly and the actual carrying through of the program of peace adopted by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies. (*Idem.*, pp. 407-410). In other words, it was a question of clearing a path for bourgeois parliamentarianism through the portals of the Soviets. The Revolution had refused to pass through the Pre-Parliament, and had to cut a channel for itself through October, therefore the task, as formulated by the opposition, consisted in saving the Revolution, with the help of the Mensheviks and the S.R.'s from the dictatorship, by diverting it into the channel of a bourgeois regime. What was in question here was the liquidation of October, no more, no less. Naturally, there could be no talk whatever of conciliation under such conditions.

On the next day, November 5, still another letter, along the same lines, was published. "I cannot, in the name of party discipline, remain silent when in the face of common sense and the elemental movement of the masses, Marxists refuse to take into consideration objective conditions which imperiously dictate to us, under the threat of a catastrophe, conciliation with all the socialist parties....I cannot, in the name of party discipline, submit to the cult of personal worship, and stake political conciliation with all socialist parties, who agree to our basic demands, upon the inclusion of this or that individual in the Ministry, nor am I willing for that reason to prolong the bloodshed even for a single minute." (*Rabochaya Gazeta* No. 204, Nov. 5, 1917). The author of this letter (Lozovsky) ends by declaring it urgent to fight for an emergency Party Congress which would decide the question "whether the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party of the Bolsheviks will remain a Marxist working class party or whether it will finally adopt a course which has nothing in common with revolutionary Marxism" (*idem*).

The situation seemed perfectly hopeless. Not only the bourgeoisie and the landlords, not only the so-called "revolutionary democracy" who still retained the control of the top bodies of many organizations (the *Vikzhel*, the army committees, the Government employees and so on) but also some of the most influential members of our own Party, members of the Central Committee and the Council of the People's Commissars were loud in their public condemnation of the Party's attempt to remain in power in order to carry out its program. The situation might have seemed hopeless, we repeat, if one looked only at the surface of events. What then remained? To acquiesce to the demands of the opposition meant to liquidate October. In that case, we should not have achieved it in the first place. Only one course was left: to march ahead, relying upon the revolutionary will of the masses. On November 7, *Pravda* carried the decisive declaration of the Central Committee of our Party, written by Lenin, and permeated with real revolutionary fervor, expressed in clear, simple and unmistakable formulations addressed to the rank and file of the Party. This proclamation put an end to any doubt as to the future policy of the Party and its Central Committee: "Shame upon all men of little faith, the waverers, and the doubters!"

Shame upon all those who have been scared by the bourgeoisie, or the shrieks of its direct or indirect servitors! There is not a *shadow* of doubt among the *masses* of workers and soldiers in Petrograd, Moscow and elsewhere. Our Party stands united and firm as one man to guard the Soviet power and to defend the interests of all toilers, above all the workers and the poor peasants...."

#### Again, on the Soviets and the Party in a Proletarian Revolution

IN our country, both in 1905 and in 1917, the Soviets of Workers' Deputies grew out of the movement itself as its natural organizational form at a certain stage of the struggle. But the young European parties, who have more or less accepted the Soviets as a "doctrine" and "principle," always run the danger of treating the Soviets as a fetish, as some self-sufficing factor in a revolution. Yet, in spite of the enormous advantages of the Soviets, as the organs of struggle for power, there may well be cases where the insurrection may unfold on the basis of other forms of organization (factory committees, trade unions, etc.) and the Soviets may spring up only during the insurrection itself, or even after it has achieved victory, as organs of state power.

Most highly instructive from this standpoint is the struggle which Lenin launched after the July days against the fetishism of the organizational form of Soviets. In proportion as the S.R.-Menshevik Soviets became in July the organizations which were openly driving the soldiers into an offensive, and crushing the Bolsheviks, to that extent the revolutionary movement of the proletarian masses was obliged and compelled to seek new paths and channels. Lenin indicated the factory committees as the organizations for the struggle of power. (Compare, for instance, the reminiscences of Comrade Ordjonikidze). It is very likely that the movement would have proceeded on those lines, if it had not been for the Kornilov uprising which forced the conciliationist Soviets to defend themselves, and made it possible for the Bolsheviks to imbue them with a new revolutionary vigor, binding them closely with the masses through the left, *i.e.*, Bolshevik wing.

This question is of enormous international importance, as was shown by the recent German experience. It was in Germany that the Soviets were several times created as organs of insurrection—without an insurrection taking place; and as organs of state power—without any power. This led to the following: in 1923, the movement of broad proletarian and semi-proletarian masses began to crystallize around the factory committees, which *in the main* fulfilled all the functions assumed by our own Soviets in the period preceding the direct struggle for power. Yet, during August and September 1923 several comrades advanced the proposal that we should proceed to the immediate creation of Soviets in Germany. After a long and heated discussion, this proposal was rejected, and rightly so. In view of the fact that the factory committees had already become in action the rallying centers of the revolutionary masses, the Soviets would have only been a parallel form of organization, without any real content, during the preparatory stage. They could have only distracted attention from the material tasks of the insurrection (army, police, armed hundreds, railways, etc.) by fixing it on a self-sufficing organizational form. And, on the other hand, the creation of Soviets as such, prior to the insurrection and apart from the immediate tasks of the insurrection would have meant an open proclamation, "We mean to attack you!" The Government, compelled to "tolerate" the factory committees, in so far as the latter had become the rallying centers of great masses, would have struck at the very first Soviet, as an official organ of an "attempt" to seize power. The Communists would have had to come out in defense of the Soviets, as purely organizational enterprises. The decisive struggle would have broken out not in order to seize or defend any material positions, nor at a moment chosen by us—a moment when the insurrection would flow from the conditions of the mass movement; no, the struggle would have flared up over the Soviet "banner," at a moment chosen by the enemy, and forced upon us. In the meantime, it is quite clear that

the entire preparatory work for the insurrection could have been carried out successfully under the authority of the factory and shop committees which were already established as mass organizations and which were constantly growing in numbers and strength; and that this would have allowed the Party to maneuver freely with regard to fixing the date for the insurrection. The Soviets, of course, would have had to arise at a certain stage. It is doubtful whether, under the above-mentioned conditions, they would have arisen as the direct organs of insurrection, in the very fire of the conflict, because of the risk of creating two revolutionary centers at the most critical moment. An English proverb says that you must not swap horses while crossing a stream. It is possible that the Soviets would have been everywhere formed after the victory at the decisive places in the country. In any case, a triumphant insurrection would have inevitably led to the creation of Soviets as the organs of state power.

It must not be forgotten that in our country the Soviets grew up in a "democratic" stage of the revolution, becoming legalized, as it were, at that stage, and subsequently inherited and utilized by us. This will not be repeated in the proletarian revolutions of the West. There, in most cases, the Soviets will be created in response to the call of the Communists; and they will consequently be created as the direct organs of proletarian insurrection. To be sure, it is not at all excluded that the disintegration of the bourgeois state apparatus will have become quite acute before the proletariat is able to seize power, and this would create the conditions for the formation of Soviets, *as the open organs of preparing the insurrection*. But this is not likely to be the general rule. Most likely, it will be possible to create the Soviets only in the very last days as the direct organs of the insurgent masses. Finally, it is quite probable that such circumstances will arise as will make the Soviets emerge either after the insurrection has passed its critical stage, or even in its closing stages as organs of the new state power. All these variants must be kept in mind so as to safeguard us from falling into organizational fetishism; and so as not to transform the Soviets from what they ought to be—a flexible and living form of struggle—into an organizational "principle" imposed upon the movement from the outside, and disrupting its normal development.

There has been some talk lately in our press to the effect that we are not, mind you, in a position to tell through what channels the proletarian revolution will come in England. Will it come through the channel of the Communist Party or through the trade unions? Such a formulation of the question makes a show of a fictitiously broad historical outlook; it is radically false and dangerous because it obliterates the chief lesson of the last few years. If the triumphant revolution did not come at the end of the war, it was because a party was lacking. This conclusion applies to Europe as a whole. It may be traced concretely in the fate of the revolutionary movement in separate countries. With respect to Germany, the case is quite a clear one. The German revolution might have been triumphant both in 1918 and 1919, had a proper party leadership been secured. We had an instance of this same thing in 1917, in the case of Finland. There, the revolutionary movement developed under exceptionally favorable circumstances, under the wing and the direct military assistance of revolutionary Russia. But the majority of the leaders in the Finnish party proved to be Social Democrats, and they ruined the revolution. The self-same lesson flows just as plainly from the Hungarian experience. There, the Communists along with the left Social Democrats did not conquer power, but were handed it by the frightened bourgeoisie. The Hungarian revolution—triumphant without a battle and without a victory—was left from the very outset without a fighting leadership. The Communist Party fused with the Social Democratic party, showing thereby that it itself was not a Communist Party; and, in consequence, in spite of the fighting spirit of the Hungarian workers, it proved incapable of keeping the power it had obtained so easily. Without a party, apart from a party, over the head of a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot conquer. That is the principal lesson of the last decade. It is true that the English trade unions may become a mighty lever of the proletarian revolution; they may, for instance, even

replace the Workers' Soviets under certain conditions and for a certain period of time. They can, however, fill such a role, not apart from a Communist Party, and certainly not *against* the Party, but only on the condition that Communist influence becomes the decisive influence in the trade unions. We have paid far too dearly for this conclusion—with regard to the role and importance of a party in a proletarian revolution—to renounce it so lightly or even to minimize its significance.

Consciousness, premeditation, and planning played a far smaller part in bourgeois revolutions than they are destined to play, and already do play in proletarian revolutions. In the former instance the motive force of the Revolution was also furnished by the masses, but the latter were much less organized and much less conscious than at the present time. The leadership remained in the hands of different sections of the bourgeoisie, and the latter had at its disposal wealth, education, and all the organizational advantages connected with them (the cities, the universities, the press, etc.). The bureaucratic monarchy defended itself in a hand-to-mouth manner, probing in the dark and then acting. The bourgeoisie would bide its time to seize a favorable moment when it could profit from the movement of the lower classes and throw its whole social weight into the scale, and so seize the state power. The proletarian revolution is precisely distinguished by the fact that the proletariat—in the person of its vanguard—acts in it not only as the main offensive force but also as the guiding force. The part played in bourgeois revolutions by the economic power of the bourgeoisie, by its education, by its municipalities and universities, is a part which can be filled in a proletarian revolution only by the Party of the proletariat. The role of the Party has become all the more important in view of the fact that the enemy has also become far more conscious. The bourgeoisie, in the course of centuries of rule, has perfected a political schooling far superior to the schooling of the old bureaucratic monarchy. If parliamentarianism served the proletariat to a certain extent as a training school for revolution, then it also served the bourgeoisie to a far greater extent as the school of counter-revolutionary strategy. Suffice it to say that by means of parliamentarianism the bourgeoisie was able so to educate the social democracy that it is today the main prop of private property. The epoch of the social revolution in Europe, as has been shown by its very first steps, will be an epoch not only of strenuous and ruthless struggle but also of planned and calculated battles—far more planned than with us in 1917.

That is why we require an approach entirely different from the prevailing one to the questions of civil war in general and of armed insurrection in particular. Following Lenin, all of us keep repeating time and again Marx's words that insurrection is an art. But this idea is transformed into a hollow phrase, to the extent that Marx's formula is not supplemented with a study of the fundamental elements of the art of civil war, on the basis of the vast accumulated experience of recent years. It is necessary to say candidly that a superficial attitude to questions of the armed insurrection is a token that the force of the social democratic tradition has not yet been overcome. A party which pays superficial attention to the questions of civil war in the hope that everything will somehow settle itself at the crucial moment, is certain to be shipwrecked. We must analyze in a collective manner the experience of the proletarian struggles, beginning with 1917.

The above-sketched history of the party groupings in 1917 also constitutes an integral part of the experience of civil war and is, we believe, of immediate importance to the policies of the Communist International as a whole. We have already said, and we repeat, that the study of disagreements cannot, and ought not, in any case, be regarded as an attack against those comrades who pursued a false policy. But on the other hand, it is absolutely impermissible to blot out the greatest chapter in the history of our Party merely because some party members failed to keep step with the proletarian revolution. The Party should and must know the *whole* of the past, so as to be able to estimate it correctly, and to assign each event to its proper place. The tradition of a revolutionary party is built not on evasions but on critical clarity.

History secured for our party revolutionary advantages that are truly inestimable. The traditions of the heroic struggle against the Tsarist monarchy, the habituation to revolutionary self-sacrifice, bound up with the conditions of underground activity; the broad theoretical study and assimilation of the revolutionary experience of mankind; the struggle against Menshevism, against the Narodniks, and against Conciliationism; the supreme experience of the 1905 Revolution; the theoretical study and assimilation of this experience during the years of counter-revolution; the examination of the problems of the international labor movement in the light of the revolutionary lessons of 1905—these were the things which in their totality gave our Party an exceptional revolutionary temper, supreme theoretical penetration, and unparalleled revolutionary sweep. Nevertheless, even within this Party, among its leaders, on the eve of decisive action there was formed a group of experienced revolutionaries, old Bolsheviks who were in sharp opposition to the proletarian revolution; and who, in the course of the most critical period of the Revolution from February 1917 to approximately February 1918, adopted on all fundamental questions an essentially social democratic position. It needed Lenin, and Lenin's exceptional influence in the Party, unprecedented even at that time, to safeguard the Party and the Revolution against the supreme confusion following from such a condition. This must never be forgotten, if we wish other Communist parties to learn anything from us. The question of selecting the leading staff is of exceptional importance to the parties of Western Europe. The experience of the abortive German October is a shocking proof of this. But this selection must proceed in the light of *revolutionary action*. During these years, Germany has provided ample opportunities for the testing of the leading party members in the moments of direct struggle. Failing this criterion, the rest is worthless. France, during these years, was much poorer in revolutionary commotions—even partial ones. But even in the political life of France we have had flashes of civil war, times when the Central Committee of the Party and the trade union leadership had to react in action to unpostponable and acute questions (such as the sanguinary meeting of January 11, 1924). A careful study of such acute episodes provides irreplaceable material for the evaluation of a party leadership, the conduct of various party organs, and individual leading members. To ignore these lessons, not to draw the necessary conclusions from them as to the choice of personalities, is to invite inevitable defeats; for without a penetrating, resolute and courageous party leadership, the victory of the proletarian revolution is impossible.

Each party, even the most revolutionary party, must inevitably produce its own organizational conservatism; for otherwise it would be lacking in necessary stability. This is wholly a question of degree. In a revolutionary party the vitally necessary dose of conservatism must be combined with a complete freedom from routine, with initiative in orientation and daring in action. These qualities are put to the severest test during turning points in history. We have already quoted the words of Lenin to the effect that even the most revolutionary parties, at a time when an abrupt change occurs in a situation and when new tasks arise as a consequence, frequently pursue the political line of yesterday, and thereby become, or threaten to become, a brake upon revolutionary development. Both conservatism and revolutionary initiative find this most concentrated expression in the leading organs of the Party. In the meantime, the European Communist parties have still to face their sharpest "turning point"—the turn from preparatory work to the actual seizure of power. This turn is the most exacting, the most unpostponable, the most responsible and the most formidable. To miss the moment for the turn is to incur the greatest defeat that a party can possibly suffer.

The experience of the European struggles, and above all the struggles in German, when looked at in the light of our own experience, tell us that there are two types of leaders who incline to drag the Party back at the very moment when it must take a stupendous leap forward. Some among them generally incline to see primarily difficulties and obstacles in the way of revolution; and to estimate each situation with a preconceived, though not always

conscious intention of avoiding any action. Marxism is turned in their hands into a method for establishing the impossibility of revolutionary action. The purest specimens of this type are the Russian Mensheviks. But this type as such is not confined to Menshevism, and to the most critical moment, it suddenly manifests itself in responsible posts in the most revolutionary party. The representatives of the second variety are distinguished by their superficial and agitational approach. They never see any obstacles or difficulties until they come into a head-on collision with them. The capacity of surmounting real obstacles by means of bombastic phrases, and the tendency to evince lofty optimism on all questions ("the ocean is only knee deep") is inevitably transformed into its polar opposite when the hour for decisive action strikes. To the first type of revolutionary, who makes mountains out of molehills, the difficulties of seizing power lie in heaping up and multiplying to the  $n$ -th degree all the difficulties he has become accustomed to see in his way. To the second type, the superficial optimist, the difficulties of revolutionary action always come as a surprise. In the preparatory period the behavior of the two is different: the former is a skeptic upon whom one cannot rely too much, that is, in a revolutionary sense; the latter, on the contrary, may seem a fanatic revolutionary. But at the decisive moment, the two march hand in hand; they both oppose the insurrection. Meanwhile, the entire preparatory work is of value only to the extent that it renders the Party and above all its leading organs capable of determining the moment for an insurrection, and of assuming the leadership of it. For the task of the Communist Party is the conquest of power for the purpose of reconstructing society.

Much has been spoken and written lately on the necessity of "Bolshevizing" the Comintern. This is a task that cannot be disputed or delayed; it is made particularly urgent after the cruel lessons of Bulgaria and Germany a year ago. Bolshevism is not a doctrine (*i.e.*, not merely a doctrine) but a system of revolutionary training for the proletarian upheaval. What is the Bolshevization of Communist parties? It is giving them such a training, and effecting such a selection of the leading staff as would prevent them from "drifting" when the hour for their October strikes. "That is the whole of Hegel, and the wisdom of books, and the meaning of all philosophy...."

#### A Brief Comment on This Book

The initial phase of the "democratic" revolution extends from the February Revolution to the crisis in April, and its solution on May 6 by the formation of a Coalition Government, with the participation of the Mensheviks and the Narodniks. Throughout this initial phase, the writer did not participate directly, arriving in Petrograd only on May 5, on the very eve of the formation of the Coalition Government. The first stage of the Revolution and the revolutionary perspectives were dealt with by me in articles written in America. In my opinion, on all fundamental points these articles are in complete harmony with the analysis of the revolution given by Lenin in his "Letters from Afar."

From the very first day of my arrival in Petrograd my work was carried on in complete coordination with the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks. Lenin's course towards the conquest of power by the proletariat I naturally supported in whole and in part. So far as the peasantry was concerned, there was not even a shade of disagreement between Lenin and myself. Lenin, at that time, was completing the first stage of his struggle against the right Bolsheviks and their slogan, "Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry." Prior to my formal entry into the Party, I participated in drafting a number of resolutions and documents, issued in the name of the Party. The sole consideration which delayed my formal entry into the Party for three months was the desire to expedite the fusion of the best elements of the Mezhrayonsi organization and the revolutionary internationalists in general, with the Bolsheviks. This policy was likewise carried out by me in complete agreement with Lenin....

Trotsky, *Lessons of October*, 1937: 21-22, 23-24, 24-25, 26-33, 38-41, 63-65, 74-78, 95-109.



# "HOW ONE SHOULD NOT WRITE THE HISTORY OF OCTOBER"

2 November 1924

*The party leaders quickly responded to Trotsky's Lessons of October (see above). The first attack came in a long editorial in Pravda, which although unsigned was written by Bukharin. It set the basic points of the "refutation" of Trotsky, especially the emphasis on Trotsky's late joining of the Party (only in 1917) and both his earlier and later disagreements with Lenin. It also contained what would be one of the basic charges against Trotsky: that having failed to win party support in 1923 he was now trying to undermine the leadership preparatory to a new bid for power. After this article there was a curious lapse of time, until mid-November, for major new attacks. The silence on the pages of Pravda was broken 14 November with a new editorial against him. Then on 19 November appeared both an editorial by Grigori Sokolnikov and the beginning of daily denunciations of Trotsky by local (factory, city, other) party organizations in the "Party Life" section of the newspaper. The same time saw the major attacks on Trotsky by Stalin and Kamenev, given below, as well as by other party luminaries. Page references in the text are to Trotsky's Lessons of October, or to the then current collected works of Lenin. Ellipses and the asterisk footnotes are as in the Pravda editorial.*

## *How One Should Not Write the History of October*

Comrade Trotsky's recently published book, "1917," which is devoted to the "Lessons of October," will soon become the mode. This is not to be wondered at, as it aimed at becoming an inner party sensation.

After the events of the past year, which have *proved* the incorrectness of the standpoint of our Party Opposition, after the facts, which have again and again proved the correctness of the leadership of our Party, Comrade Trotsky again revives the discussion, although with other means. The preface to the book (and it in this preface, as well as in the annotations, that there lies the "kernel" of the book) is written in a semi-Aesopic language, so that the totally inexperienced reader will fail to observe the hints and allusions with which the preface is interlarded. This peculiar cryptic language, for which Comrade Trotsky, in spite of the fact that he himself demands "critical clarity," has a strong preference, must be deciphered. For the work of Comrade Trotsky, which claims to be a guide to the "Study of October," threatens to become a guide for "every present and future discussion." It takes upon itself the responsibility to fight against the line of the Party, as well as of the Comintern, in which it in no way bears the character of a theoretical analysis, but more resembles a political platform, upon the basis of which it will be possible to undermine the exact decisions adopted by the respective congresses.

Comrade Trotsky's book is not only written for the Russian reader; this can be recognized without difficulty. It is to a large extent written for the "information" of foreign comrades. Now, when the problem of "Bolshevizing" stands on the order of the day in a whole number of Communist parties, when the interest for the history of our Party is undoubtedly increasing, the book of Comrade Trotsky can render a great disservice. It is not only not a textbook of Bolshevism, but it will much rather become a factor for "debolshevizing" the foreign Communist parties—so biased, one-sided, and at times exceedingly falsely, does it describe the events, from the analysis of which it seeks to draw conclusions for the present.

This is what renders necessary a critical examination of this new book of Comrade Trotsky. It must not remain unanswered. One can only regret that Comrade Trotsky, who draws conclusions from "the teachings of October" which, it is true, are false, draws no conclusions from the more recent epoch of last year's discussion. The best test of different points of view is, as Comrade Trotsky himself admits, experience, life itself. Life however has shown that the ruling line which is recognized by the Party, has not only not

brought the country to "the verge of ruin," as the last year's opposition predicted, which prophesied for the country all the plagues of Egypt, but in spite of events, which are independent of every "platform," such as the bad harvest etc., has brought the country forward.

On the other hand a whole number of new tasks under new conditions have arisen: difficulties which are determined by the process of growth. The whole Party desires, before all, concrete work under a leadership which has been tried by experience, upon a "platform" which has withstood this experience. For this reason it was not in the least desirable to reopen the old disputes, even if in another form.

Comrade Trotsky saw fit to do this. Of course he bears the whole responsibility for it. Willingly or unwillingly, we must reply to this book, as the Party cannot permit a propaganda which is directed against the decisions which the Party adopted with such firmness and unanimity to remain unanswered. We will therefore examine the statement which Comrade Trotsky has now submitted to the Party, the "lessons" which he has drawn from October and is now very kindly communicating to our young and old comrades.

# I

## *The Question of Historical Investigation*

The axle upon which the statements of Comrade Trotsky turn is the estimate of the importance of various periods in the history of our Party. He sees things essentially as follows: the whole period of the development of the Party up to October 1917 is a thing of very little importance. Not until the moment of seizing power was the question decided, it is this period which stands out before all others, only then have we the possibility of testing classes, parties, their leading cadres, and individuals.

"It would mean a piece of barren scholasticism, but in no way a Marxian political analysis, were we at the present time to occupy ourselves with an analysis of the different viewpoints of revolution in general, and of the Russian in particular, and thereby to overlook the experiences of 1917. It would be as if we were to indulge in disputes over the advantages of various methods of swimming, but obstinately refuse to turn our eyes to the river, where these methods are being applied by bathers. There is no better test for a point of view over revolution than its application in revolution itself, precisely as a method of swimming can best be proved when the swimmer springs into the water.... (page 16)

What is the meaning of bolshevizing the Communist parties? It means such an education of these parties, such a selection of the leading persons, that they will not run off the track at the moment of their October. Herein lies Hegel, the book wisdom and the essence of all philosophies....(page 65).

These sentences only contain *half* the truth, and one can therefore (as Comrade Trotsky does) draw totally false conclusions from them.

Comrade Trotsky says to the Communist parties: Study October in order to be victorious! One must not overlook October.

Certainly one must not do that. Just as one must neither forget the year 1905, nor the very instructive years of reaction. Who, and where and when, has recommended such a monstrous thing? Who, and where and when, has even ventured to advocate such an absurdity?

No one has recommended it. *But precisely in order to understand the pre-conditions of the October victory*, one must at all costs look beyond the immediate preparations of the revolt. But in no event must one be *separated* from the other. In no circumstances must one estimate groups, persons and tendencies by disconnecting them from that period of preparation which Comrade Trotsky compares to disputes over "the best method of swimming." Of course in the "critical period," when it is a question of a decisive struggle, all questions are faced in all their acuteness, and all shades, tendencies and groups tend to express on this occasion their most characteristic, inner, essential qualities. On the other hand, the

explanation for the act that they play a positive role during the flood time of revolution, does not always lie in the correctness of their "standpoint."

*"It is not difficult to be a revolutionary when revolution has already broken out, when everything is in flames,"*—thus Comrade Lenin formulated this aspect of the question (*Collected Works*, Volume 17, Page 183 [Russian Edition]). In another passage he says: "The revolutionary is not he who becomes a revolutionary on the outbreak of revolution, but he who defends the principles and slogans of the revolution at the time of the most furious reaction." (*Ibid.* Volume VII./2 Page 151).

That is not the same thing as Trotsky says.

Let us dot the "i." What determined the attitude of the *Party* of the Bolsheviks in October? It was determined by the whole previous history of the Party, by its struggle against all opportunist deviations, from the extreme Mensheviks up to the Trotskyites (for example the "August" Bloc). Can one however, perchance, say that the correct standpoint of Comrade Trotsky (because it coincided with the Bolshevik standpoint) in the October days resulted from his attitude in the preparatory period? Obviously one cannot say that. On the contrary, had a historical miracle occurred at that time, and had the Bolshevik workers followed that which Comrade Trotsky proclaimed (unity with the liquidators, fight against the "sectarianism" of Lenin, Menshevik political platform during the fight against the Zimmerwald Left, etc.), *then there would have been no October victory*. Comrade Trotsky, however, entirely avoids dealing with this period, although it would be his duty to impart just these "lessons" to the Party.

Let us quote another example. There fought side by side with us on the October barricades many Left Social Revolutionaries. In the decisive moment of October they contributed their share to the cause of victory. Did that mean, however, that they had been "tried" once and for all by October? Unfortunately this was by no means the case as the post-October experience has shown, which to a considerable extent confirmed the estimate given of these petty-bourgeois revolutionaries *before October*.

October isolated, therefore in no way suffices for the "test." It is rather the second moment which is of more importance, the moment which Comrade Lenin so categorically pointed out.

The statement of Comrade Trotsky, that the "Bolshevising" of the Communist parties consists in such an education and such a selection of a body of "leaders" that they shall not run off the track at the moment of their October, is, therefore correct, *in as far as it also includes the appropriation of the experiences of the "preparatory period."* For even the immediate experiences of the Russian October can neither be understood nor made use of if we do not take to heart the teachings of this preparatory period. Comrade Trotsky, who regards the matter in such a way that the Bolshevik Party in its actual essence only began to exist after the October days, does not see the *uninterrupted connection of the line of the Party* in its entirety up to "the present moment."

And just in the same way he fails to see that after the seizure of power, even after the end of the Civil War, history is by no means at an end. In the same way the history of our Party is also not at an end, the history which is likewise a "testing of the Party policy," for it not only contains discussions regarding the one or the other standpoint, but also the experiences of *practical policy*.

One had to take care not "to leave the track" in October, but the same applies to the time of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (when, as Trotsky admits, the "head," that means the life and death, of the Soviet power was at stake). One had also to take care not to leave the track in the discussion of 1921, for without Lenin's policy we would have endangered everything. It would also have been out of place to leave the track in the last year, for without the money reform, without the economic policy, etc. conducted by the Party, we should have likewise arrived at a desperate situation. In all these critical situations, however, Comrade Trotsky has left the track, and in the same manner as in the pre-February

period of his political existence, when he had not broken with the open opponents of Bolshevism.

"The tradition of a revolutionary party," writes Comrade Trotsky (Page 62), "will not be created through maintaining silence, but out of critical clarity." Very true. The demand for "critical clarity" however must not be raised only in regard to the actions which took place in October, but also in relation to the preceding and the succeeding period of development. Only in this manner is an actual test possible; for the Party of the proletariat acts constantly and passes through more than one "critical" period.

## II

### *The Lessons of the Revolution of the Year 1917 and the Struggle within the Party*

Shall silence be maintained regarding October and its prologue, the February Revolution? Certainly not. That would show either a lack of conscientiousness or stupidity. But, quite in vain, Comrade Trotsky, with his hints and allusions as well as with open appeals, wishes to create the impression that the history of October is being dealt with in a "step-motherly" fashion, because in this respect some sort of mental reservations (a false, "half-conscious estimate") play a role. Such statements as: "Still more inadmissible...would it be to maintain silence, out of considerations of a personal character, which are of quite secondary importance, regarding extremely important problems of the October upheaval, which have international significance" (Page 12), are hardly appropriate.

This statement is certainly correct.

But in the first place Comrade Trotsky conceals the fact that no less has been written over October than over any other period. *Lenin's* writings contain a brilliant estimate of this period, from which the Party will be able for a long time to draw all the essential teachings of October.

Secondly, Comrade Trotsky fails to mention that the persons in question have repeatedly admitted their errors, as is well known to the whole Party.

Comrade *Zinoviev*, in his "History of the Russian Communist Party" and in earlier publications, has spoken with all clarity regarding them, and has declared the same before the Party and before the Communist International; Comrade *Lenin* also spoke concerning this, but at no time did he connect this error with the later, post-October, activity of these comrades who took the wrong course in October.<sup>1</sup>

Comrade Trotsky now seeks to make use of these errors in order to revise the whole Party policy and to "correctly expound" the whole history of the Party. *Therein* lies the kernel of the statements of Comrade Trotsky. The whole analysis of the events from April to October is so stated as if the differences of opinion, which "tore the Party to pieces," had become more and more acute until they finally broke out into a conflict which almost led to collapse, and that the Revolution was only saved thanks to the efforts of Comrade *Lenin* who had the courage to oppose the Central Committee and who was supported by Comrade Trotsky, who, so to speak, "anticipated" the fundamental idea of *Lenin*.

This analysis hardly contains anything which is in accordance with the facts.

<sup>1</sup>It is necessary in this connection to refer to certain facts. In spite of differences of opinion, *Kamenev*, on the proposal of *Lenin*, was elected at the April Conference to the Central Committee of the Party, and in the moment of the insurrection, on behalf of the Central Committee, took the chair at the II Soviet Congress. Already in November 1917 *Zinoviev*, whose disagreements with the Central Committee only lasted a few days, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Party delivered a report to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee advocating the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. At the 7th Party Conference (beginning of March 1918), *Zinoviev*, on behalf of the Central Committee, spoke for the *Lenin* policy against Trotsky and the "Lefts." From this it is to be seen that the whole Party regarded the October errors of these comrades as nothing else than a temporary difference of opinion. On the contrary, they entrusted them with tasks of the greatest importance, in spite of the fact that they did not for a moment approve of the errors of these comrades.

In the first place Comrade Trotsky totally ignores the Party. It does not exist, its mood is not to be perceived, it has vanished. There stands only Comrade Trotsky, with Lenin visible in the distance, and we perceive a slow-witted, nameless Central Committee. The Petrograd organisation, which was the real collective organiser of the workers' insurrection, is altogether absent. Comrade Trotsky's whole treatment of history revolves exclusively around "the highest pinnacles" of the Party structure. With regard to the whole Party structure we look in vain in the artistically painted picture-puzzle of Comrade Trotsky: "Where is the Party?" Is it permissible for Marxists to write history in such a manner? That is a caricature of Marxism. To write the history of October and to *overlook the Party* means to stand with both feet on an individualistic standpoint, upon the standpoint of heroes and masses. Such a standpoint is not suitable for the education of the Party membership. But also from the point of view of an analysis of the *leading figures*, the chronicle of Comrade Trotsky cannot be approved, for it distorts the facts. Let us see how Comrade Trotsky describes the course of events:

"The decisions of the April Conference gave the Party a correct attitude. The differences of opinion of the leaders of the Party were not liquidated thereby. On the contrary. In the course of events they assumed a more concrete form, and they reached their acutest point at the most decisive moment of the Revolution, in the October days." (Page 31)

After the July days:

"The mobilising of the right elements of the Party increased. Their criticism became more determined." (Page 32)

And finally before October:

"An extraordinary Party Congress proved to be unnecessary. The pressure of Lenin secured the necessary turn to the left of the forces, both in the Central Committee and in the parliamentary faction." (Page 36)

All this is extremely—"incorrect." For already at the time of the VIth Party Conference there had *taken place a complete ideological consolidation of the Party*. The Central Committee elected at the VIth Party Congress stood unconditionally on the platform of the revolt. Lenin exercised an enormous influence upon the Central Committee, for Lenin himself was a leading member of the C.C. as is known to everybody. But to represent the matter as if the majority of the C.C. were, so to speak, almost against the revolt, means not to know either the Party or the Central Committee, and means to sin against the truth. Was not the revolt decided upon on the 10th of October with an overwhelming majority of the Central Committee? The tremendous energy, the truly enormous revolutionary passion, the ingenious analysis of events and the powerful magnetic powers of Comrade Lenin gave a firm stamp to the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the C.C. Comrade Trotsky, however, wants at all costs to *separate Lenin from the C.C.*, to oppose them to each other and to tear asunder the indivisible band, which distorted in this manner. Were it not so, if that which Comrade Trotsky writes were correct, then it would be quite unintelligible 1) why the Party was not split by the conflict; 2) how it was able to triumph; 3) *how the conflict (the resignation of some leading members of the C.C.) could be liquidated within a few days by the return of these comrades to their posts*. This "miracle," (a miracle from the standpoint of the assumptions of Comrade Trotsky) as is known, was accomplished, and without much difficulty. It is true that one can hint here that after the victory there are many who are prepared to join the victors, as one does not "sit in judgement" against victors.

But it must not be forgotten that the victory in Petrograd and in Moscow was merely the *beginning of the struggle*, the beginning of enormous difficulties, which was perfectly clear to every Party member. These considerations do not help in any way to explain what is to be explained.

All this, however, becomes perfectly understandable if we do not consider the events from such an egocentric point of view as does Comrade Trotsky. In this case we get the

following picture: From April to October there gradually disappear the remnants of vacillation in the Party; in October they have been reduced to a minimum; the *Party* is proceeding with firm ranks into the fight. Above there remain some comrades who are not in agreement with the general line of the Party. But precisely because the *Party* (that is no little thing, Comrade Trotsky) was *united*, precisely because the overwhelming majority of the C.C. went with Lenin, these comrades were also carried along by the general stream of the Party and class, and immediately returned to their posts. They have been far more thoroughly "proved" than merely through the October days.

### III

#### *War, Revolution and the Standpoint of Comrade Trotsky*

The "Chronicle" of Comrade Trotsky, as well as his annotations to the same, not only incorrectly describe the relations within the Party, but also the preparation of the "Bolshevizing" of Comrade Trotsky himself. (We are *solely* interested here in his political attitude.) We learn from the annotations of Comrade Trotsky's book, for example, that in the articles written by L. D. Trotsky in America there was almost completely anticipated (!) the later political tactics of the revolutionary social democrats. The fundamental conclusions of these articles agree in almost every detail (!) with the political perspectives, which Comrade Lenin developed in his famous *Letters from Abroad*. (Page 370.)

We learn here that in the "course of time the differences of opinion between the standpoint of *Nashe Slovo* [Trotsky's newspaper-ed.] and Lenin became continually less." (Page 377.) On the other hand, we learn a whole number of details regarding the errors of the *Pravda*, of a number of Bolsheviks, etc.

But after perusing the book we are little informed in what these differences of opinion, which grew continually less, consisted. And we are decidedly misled if we take it as correct that Comrade Trotsky had already anticipated the Leninist policy, as stated by that terrible busybody Comrade *Lenzner*, who was entrusted with the perusal of the book and with adding the notes. (Lenin did not know that he, according to Comrade Trotsky, had committed a plagiarism.) The question of the attitude during the war, however, gives the key to a number of other questions and leads us to the laboratory where the slogans were drawn up, which soon were to play such an extraordinarily important, one might rightly say, world-historical role.

We will attempt to call to mind several things in this respect.

1. "*Peace or Civil War*." This is the first difference of opinion, one which involves a considerable measure of principle, the events, as well as the tactics, of the revolutionary social democrats and the Bolshevik C.C. Right at the beginning of the war was a specific Bolshevik slogan, a slogan, which drew a line of demarcation between true revolutionaries and, not only all shades of chauvinists, but also of the internationalists of a petty-bourgeois, pacifist, "humanitarian" color who sought to approach the centrist elements. Only by bluntly raising the question of civil war was there created the possibility to select the cadre of those revolutionaries who afterwards formed the kernel of the Communist Party.

Comrade Trotsky was most decidedly opposed to this slogan, which he considered as a narrow slogan, unsuited for mass propaganda. Is that perchance an "anticipation" of the Leninist standpoint?

2. *Defeatism and the Fight against it*. The second distinguishing criterion of the Bolshevik attitude was the slogan that the revolutionary social democrats (we would now say Communists) must, in the *imperialist* war, before all desire the defeat of their own government. Comrade Trotsky characterised this attitude as an inverted nationalism, or nationalism with a minus sign. Now, however, the deep meaning of this Leninist attitude, whose roots form the chief source of the Bolshevik idea, is now perfectly clear. Yes, the chief source. One only needs to read, for example, the recently published polemic between *Lenin*

and *Plekhanov* over the draft programme of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (*Lenin's Collected Works*, Vol. 2) in order to perceive this. In this polemic with *Plekhanov*, *Lenin* finds fault with the *Plekhanov* draft on the ground that this is a textbook and not a declaration of war; there we read about capitalism in general, whilst we require *war against Russian capitalism*—that is the essence of this polemic on the part of *Lenin*. Why did *Lenin* insist upon this? Precisely because he was a *fighter* and not a declaimer. The slogan of the defeat of one's *own* government was a *declaration of war* on every form of pacifism, even when it was hidden under the feather bed of noble phrases, on every one who advocated the defence of the fatherland, even when it was hidden under the cleverest mask. This was the most decided break. A *real severance* of all connections with one's own bourgeois state. It was precisely such an attitude which determined in reality, in actual practice, the *international* standpoint of Bolshevism. This was the second difference of principle between *Trotsky* and the *Bolsheviks*.

3. *Unity with Menshevik Faction of Chkheidze*. Even during the war Comrade *Trotsky* still advocated unity with such elements as the faction, and he did not have the courage to declare for a definite organisational break which was the necessary preliminary to a correct policy. It was not without reason that *Lenin* greatly feared that many comrades would be misled by *Trotskyism*. It is interesting to note that *Trotsky*, even in May 1917, did not perceive his earlier errors. Thus we read on page 380 of the book in question:

"On the 7th of May 1917 there was open the city conference of the United Social Democrats (*Bolsheviks* and *Internationalists*). The Conference greeted Comrade *Trotsky* who was present as guest. In reply to this greeting Comrade *Trotsky* declared that for him, *who always stood for the unity of the social democratic forces* [*Italics in Pravda*, not *Trotsky*] unity is not an end in itself, that this formula must be given a revolutionary content, etc. (Page 380).

From this it is perfectly clear that Comrade *Trotsky* does not only *not condemn* his fight for the unity of the liquidators, but makes this tremendous fatal error almost the basis, so to speak of unity with the *Bolsheviks*, this time fortunately being prepared to give the formula a revolutionary content.

Unfortunately the same *faulty* estimation of his own mistakes in the organisational question is also *observed at present*, (it was clearly revealed by Comrade *Trotsky* in the last year's discussion). Comrade *Trotsky* justifies himself with regard to the accusations on the part of "some one of the deep thinking sextons of the type of Comrade *Sorin*" on account of his fight against the *Bolshevik* sectarianism, by a more than strange method.

"My objection to the article was the following: sectarianism still exists as a heritage of the past. But in order to reduce it the *Mezhduraiontsy* must cease their separate existence" (Page 66).

Comrade *Trotsky* already therefore, when he advocated uniting with the *Bolsheviks*, *condemned* *Bolshevik* sectarianism as a bad inheritance of the wicked past.

But do we repudiate this heritage? *Not in the least*, for this so-called sectarianism was, as a matter of fact, the *method* of the creation of our Party, that is the organizational basic principle of *Bolshevism*. And when Comrade *Trotsky* writes on page 65 of his "preface" that he has recognized his "great organisational mistakes" and on page 66 justifies the charge of sectarianism directed against pre-revolutionary *Bolshevism*, this means that he has not yet drawn all the consequences and all the teachings from the history of our Party. He can, however, not do this if he considers the birthday of the Party to be the day of its union with the *Mezhduraiontsy*, or even the glorious October days, in which Comrade *Trotsky*, not without birth pangs, was himself born a *Bolshevik*.

4. *Fight against the Zimmerwald Left*. Finally, there must be mentioned the attitude of Comrade *Trotsky* on a "world scale." Comrade *Trotsky*, who conducted the fight against chauvinists, social patriots, etc., was scornful towards the *Zimmerwald Left*. He regarded them likewise as sectarians, as a *Bolshevik* whim, quite unadapted for the conditions

abroad. Already in America, where, as Comrade Lenzner assures us, Comrade Trotsky anticipated the later standpoint of Comrade Lenin, he conducted an active fight against solidarity with the Zimmerwald Left. Trotsky could not approve this "split" from the Zimmerwald centrists. The comrades who were entrusted with the editing of "1917" did not take any trouble to illuminate for the international proletariat this part of our Party history, which is quite as important for the International as the question of civil war, of defeatism, etc.; for here there is no less at stake than the choice between the two and three International.

5. *The Concept of "Permanent" Revolution.* Comrade Trotsky has, as is proved, not only "anticipated" Lenin's later standpoint, but he proved himself to be right in one of the most essential points of our revolutionary theory and at the same time of our revolutionary strategy, and that is, in the question of "permanent" revolution. *Comrade Trotsky* writes concerning this as follows:

"Lenin, immediately before 1905, gave expression to the unique character of the Russian revolution in the formula of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. This formula, as later development showed, could merely be of importance as a stage to the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat, supported by the peasantry" (Page 27).

What can be the meaning of that? In 1905 there was a fight of the Bolsheviks, who issued the slogan "dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry," against both the Trotsky-Parvus group, whose slogan was "Down with the Tsar and up with a Labour government!" and the Poles, at the head of whom stood Rosa Luxemburg, who issued the formula "the proletariat supported by the peasantry."

Whose standpoint proved to be *correct*?

Comrade Trotsky evades giving a definite and detailed reply to this question. *Indirectly* however he finds the correctness of *his formula* confirmed: The formula of Lenin could "merely" be a stage to the formula of Trotsky. But to say that the standpoint of Trotsky proved to be correct is false. It proved to be incorrect, and the further development has proved its incorrectness. The peculiarity of Comrade Trotsky's attitude consists precisely in the fact that *he wished to skip a stage which could not be skipped*. (He forgot one trifle, the peasantry.)

"It is not sufficient to be a revolutionary and a follower of socialism or a Communist in general" wrote Comrade Lenin. "One must understand how to find at any moment the particular link in the chain which one must seize with all his force in order to hold the entire chain and the *prepare a sure transition to the following link*." (*Collected Works*:1 Volume 15, Page 223.)

It is precisely this which the slogan of Comrade Trotsky failed to give. He has "disregarded" that special link of the chain which should have been grasped with all force, he has underestimated the role of the peasantry and thereby *practically* isolated himself from the workers.

"Magnificent, catching, intoxicating slogans, which have no basis—that is the nature of the revolutionary phrase." (Lenin, Vol. 15: 100.)

It does not follow from the fact that after many years, and *after we have passed over a certain stage*, the socialist revolution has set in, that Comrade Trotsky is right. Such an assertion would contradict the facts and would be based upon a misunderstanding of the nature of the tactics of Bolshevism, of its, if one may so say, political methodology, which unites a persistent march forward to the great aim with an austere soberness, which rejects all prejudices and all superficiality in its estimate of every concrete situation. Here also Comrade Trotsky is in the wrong. *Here also his book entirely misleads the reader*. Not to mention the fact that Comrade Trotsky remains silent as to how his "permanent" ultra-left phrase was wedded to an extremely right policy and a bitter struggle against the Bolshevik Party.



## IV

*The Lessons of October and the Communist International*

One of the practical foundations upon which the "Preface" of Trotsky is based is the endeavour, to put it mildly, to "dispute" the policy of the E.C.C.I. [Executive Committee of the Communist International]. He sets out to take revenge for the discussion he lost in 1923 and thereby to oppose, not only the line of the Central Committee, but also the policy of the Comintern as a whole. For this purpose he has distorted the meaning of the most important epochs of the class struggle of the proletariat in Germany and in Bulgaria. In this he hints that the mistakes of several comrades in 1917 caused the failure of the Communists in Germany and in Bulgaria in 1923. The structure of this idea is very simple when we strip off the husk of words. XYZ erred in the Russian October, XYZ now lead the Communist International. The Comintern has lost the battles A, B, C. It follows that XYZ are responsible for this, as they are carrying on their traditions of the Russian October. Briefly stated that is the meaning of the long effusion.

The frame of this completely ridiculous syllogism has a concrete content. It is therefore necessary critically to illuminate this content, whereupon the whole complicated construction of Comrade Trotsky will collapse.

*Point 1. Bulgaria*

Comrade Trotsky writes:

"In the past year we had two severe defeats in Bulgaria. First the Party, owing to *doctrinaire* and *fatalistic* considerations, missed a most extraordinary favourable moment for revolutionary action (the peasants' revolt after the Zankov putsch). Afterwards the Party, in order to make good its mistakes, plunged into the September revolt without having prepared the political and organisational pre-conditions therefore" (page 12).

As the reader will easily see, the reason for the defeat is here considered to be, first Menshevik fatalism, and secondly unlimited optimism (no preparation etc.). These two features are also mentioned in characterising the types of October opportunism. The connection between the Russian October and the present Comintern leadership is therefore completely set up.

Let us, however, examine the *facts* a little more closely. The first defeat was the result of the fact that the Bulgarian Party had dealt with the *peasantry* quite incorrectly, and did not know how to estimate their movement or the role of the Peasants' League as a whole or its left wing. They rather adopted the standpoint: "Down with the king, up with a workers' government." At the decisive moment, when it was necessary to take the leadership into their hands and to mount up on the crest of a powerful peasants' wave, the Party declared itself neutral, claiming that the fight was between the town and the rural bourgeoisie, which was no concern of the proletariat. These were the "considerations" of the Communist Party of Bulgaria. They have been committed to writing, and can be now proved by documents. If we wish to have an analogy with our October (we should, by the way, be more cautious with analogies), it would be much more apt to take the *Kornilov* days (Kerensky-Tambuliski, Kornilov-Zankov). Here, according to the statement of Comrade Trotsky himself, too much support was given to Kerensky, and the distinction between the fight against Kornilov and the defence of Kerensky was not understood. In Bulgaria, however, the exact opposite error was committed.

Wherein therefore lie the "Lessons of October"?

Apart from this, the comrades who are at present members of the E.C.C.I. adopted during the Kornilov days a thoroughly correct attitude, and the whole E.C.C.I. exercised a thoroughly correct criticism of the Communist Party of Bulgaria and urged them on.

The second defeat in Bulgaria is a fact, and Comrade Trotsky describes the conditions under which it took place. Will you be so good, Comrade Trotsky, to say, whether in this case you support the old formula of Plekhanov during the time of Menshevik decay: "One

should not have taken up arms?" Was it necessary or not for the Bulgarian Communists to take up arms?

Yes or no?

Comrade Trotsky does not reply to this. According to our opinion it was *necessary* to take up arms, as only by this means was it possible to maintain contact with the peasantry who were entering the struggle with elementary force. But there was no time for preparation. That is the true picture of the events. The "Lessons" of Comrade Trotsky have nothing in the least to do with it.

### *Point 2. Germany.*

Still more interesting is the question of the defeat of the German proletariat in October last year.

"We have seen there in the second half of the past year a *classical* demonstration of the fact that a most extraordinary favourable revolutionary situation of world historical importance can be missed." (page 12)

According to the opinion of Comrade Trotsky therefore, the failure here consisted in the fact that a "classical" moment was missed. It was necessary at all costs to take up the decisive struggle and the victory would have been ours. Here Comrade Trotsky draws a complete analogy with the October Revolution in Russia. There as here, we were pushed forward. In Russia, under the pressure of Lenin, we decided upon action and were victorious—in Germany, without the pressure of Lenin, no decision was made and the appropriate moment was lost. Now, however, under the influence of the Russian October Revolution it is declared that the forces for the decisive struggle were not sufficient. That is the meaning of the "German events" according to Comrade Trotsky.

But here we have before us mere schematics and grey abstraction. Comrade Trotsky elaborates how history would have been written if the opponents of the revolt had been in the majority in the Russian C.P.: it would then have been said that the forces were too limited, that the enemy was fearfully strong, etc.

All this is only *outwardly* convincing; yes, it is probable that history would have been written in this manner. But that is *in no way a proof that the forces of the German revolution in October 1923 were not overestimated.*

It is false to say the moment was a "classical" one, for *the social democrats proved themselves to be far stronger than we thought.* An analogy with the Russian October is quite out of place here. In Germany there were no armed soldiers who were for the Revolution. We could not issue the slogan of peace. There was no peasant agrarian movement. There was no such party as ours. But apart from all that it proved that social democracy has not yet outlived itself. These *concrete* facts had therefore to be dealt with. *At the time of the decisive events the E.C.C.I. declared itself in favour of the October policy.* Now that, owing to the objective conditions this suffered a defeat, and that, thanks to the right leaders this defeat was "greater than necessary," Comrade Trotsky, who has *in fact always supported the right opportunist wing which is inclined to capitulation and opposed the left,* now gives a "profound" theoretical basis of his conception, and thereby launches a blow against the leading circles of the Comintern. *Such* lessons must not be drawn either from the Russian or the German October.

It is also quite inadmissible to cling to many errors to which Comrade Trotsky still clings.

One of the lessons (the actual lessons), of the German October is that before action the most far-reaching mobilisation of the masses is necessary. This work has been greatly neglected. In Hamburg, for example, during the revolt there were not councils and our party organisation was not capable of drawing the ten thousands of strikers into the struggle. Throughout the whole of Germany there were no soviets; according to Comrade Trotsky's opinion that was right, as the soviets were substituted for by the factory councils. As a

matter of fact, these factory councils could not replace the soviets, as they did not comprise the whole population, including the most backward and indifferent, as the soviets do in the critical and tense moments of the class struggle.

The book of Comrade Trotsky calls for a study of October. This slogan does not contain anything new. It is appropriate for the members of our Party as well as for our foreign comrades. Comrade Trotsky's book, or to be more correct, his preface, claims to be a *guide* in this study. To this we must say, in the most definite manner: it *cannot* fulfill this role. It will, however, mislead the comrades, who, behind the surface fine style, will not observe the complete lack of proportion, the distortion of the true party history, that it is no mirror of the Party, but a *caricature*.

The publication of this "caricature" is by no means a chance event. After what we have said above it is not difficult to perceive to what the conclusions indicated by Comrade Trotsky lead.

In fact: if, as Comrade Trotsky falsely states, in October 1917 something correct could be carried through only *against* the Central Committee, is it not possible that such a situation may arise again? What guarantee is there that the leadership will be the right one? And whether it is correct at the present time? The sole "test" is October 1917. Can one trust those who have not stood this test? And did not the Comintern suffer a defeat in Bulgaria and in Germany in consequence of these leaders? Is it not necessary to study the October in such a way that just these problems are more closely investigated?

That is the essence of those problems which Comrade Trotsky, after the failure of his frontal attack in the past year, brings forward for the attention of his readers. Comrade Trotsky can, however, be quite convinced that the Party will understand how to judge rightly and in good time this quiet undermining work. The Party wants work and no fresh discussion. The Party desires true Bolshevik unity.

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## KAMENEV—THE PARTY AND TROTSKYISM

18 November 1924

*Trotsky's "Lessons of October" stung the party leaders to a vigorous counter-attack. Kamenev, Stalin and Zinoviev all responded promptly. Trotsky had pointed out Kamenev's and Zinoviev's opposition to the October seizure of power. In doing so, however, he allowed them to focus on Trotsky's own history of conflict with Lenin while they contritely acknowledged their own brief error and Lenin's forgiveness of it. Much of Kamenev's attack consisted of a lengthy history of Trotsky's differences with the Bolsheviks before he joined the Party in 1917 (mostly omitted here). He in effect argued that Trotsky never had been a true Bolshevik, even after 1917, stating explicitly that Trotsky "has not absorbed the principle of Bolshevism." He accused Trotsky of being the main conduit for "petty bourgeois" groups and ideas to enter the Party. Worst of all, he charged, Trotsky believed that "Leninism must be improved by Trotskyism." This charge, that something called "Trotskyism" existed and that Trotsky wanted to use it to supplant "Leninism," became the recurring theme of the attacks on Trotsky, and was especially damaging given Lenin's near godlike status by this time. The main articles by all three of the triumvirate—Kamenev, Stalin, Zinoviev—posed this in the very titles of their articles; that could hardly be accidental. Kamenev gave this as a speech*

*to party, trade union and military groups on November 18, 19 and 21, and then published it. Only a small part of this very long essay is given here.*

L. Kamenev  
*The Party and Trotskyism*

The following is a written version of the speech given by me on 18 November at the session held by the Moscow Committee, enlarged by the active Party functionaries, and repeated on 19 November at the session of the Communist faction of the Trade Union Council, and on 21 November at the conference of military functionaries.

L. K.

Comrades!

The subject of my speech will be Comrade Trotsky's latest publication, the article which appeared on the eve of the seventh anniversary of the October Revolution, and entitled by its author "The Lessons of October."

Trotsky presents the Party with books fairly frequently. Hitherto we have not thought it necessary to pay much attention to these books, although it is not difficult to find in many of them various deviations from Bolshevism, from the official ideology of our Party. But this book must be accorded special attention, and subjected to a thorough analysis, the more that Comrade Trotsky has selected the theme of the lessons of October for his most recent publication.

As our whole Party, the whole Communist International, the whole international labour movement, and the whole working youth, are learning the lessons taught by the October Revolution, and will continue to learn them, it is not possible to consider the interpretation of these lessons as the private affair of this or that writer. As the "Lessons of October" appears with the countenance of the Party, and as it has been written by a member of the C.C. and the Political Bureau of our Party, which—and this is no secret—is the leading party in the Comintern, then it is perfectly clear that we are threatened by the danger of having such proclamations, such "lessons," accepted as textbook by not only our youthful members, but also by the whole Comintern. And the form assumed by Comrade Trotsky's work shows it to aim at being a textbook for the Comintern.

All who have read the article are bound to see that it appeals not only to our Party, but the international proletariat as well, and to the Communist parties of all countries. And thus it is not a matter of private opinion, but a political conflict concerning the whole Party. Should any comrades maintain that the conflict aroused by Comrade Trotsky's book is merely a conflict between Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev, Stalin, and Kamenev, a difference of opinion between litterateurs, these comrades would prove that they are unable to grasp the real interests of the Party. Comrades holding such an opinion can only do so because they would like to utilise the Party conflicts for the purpose of forming some third group based on the slogan: "The litterateurs are quarrelling among themselves, but it has nothing to do with us."

No one has a right to stand aside in this conflict. It concerns one of the most far-reaching questions of our inner life, and of the life of the Comintern. The question is: Can the Party recommend the proletariat to accept the lessons as taught by Comrade Trotsky's book, or should the Party exercise the whole of its authority in warning the proletariat against the teaching of the "Lessons of October?"

I am not desirous of here entering into a long controversy with this article of Comrade Trotsky's. Comrade Trotsky is an excellent writer, and his gifted pen has done the Party much valuable service. But here it serves interests hostile to the Party, here it does not serve Bolshevism, but the cause of those seeking to disintegrate and discredit Bolshevism—both the Bolshevism embodying the ideology of the proletarian revolution and the Bolshevism organising the fighting force of the proletariat. And Comrade Trotsky does this by means of an exceedingly artistic, but essentially incorrect, and inaccurate, description of the whole

of the events between February and October. I have no doubt but that the Party will call upon a number of its writers, among those who participated in the events of this period and took immediate part in the struggle leading up to the October Revolution, and that these will refute the various misrepresentations made by Comrade Trotsky with reference to decisive moments in the history of our Party during this epoch.

The April demonstration is misrepresented, the April conference is misrepresented, the events in June and July are misrepresented, the events in connection with the preliminary parliament are misrepresented, and finally the course taken by events in October itself are misrepresented. Here I cannot dwell upon the details required for the restoration of historical truth, or on the confronting of Comrade Trotsky's assertions by documentary evidence. What I want to deal with here is the general question of the social and political import of the attitude adopted by Comrade Trotsky, and the significance of this attitude when considered in the light of the previous positions taken up by Comrade Trotsky, and of the role played by Comrade Trotsky.

We have hitherto abstained from putting this question, for easily comprehensible reasons. But now we can avoid it no longer, for Comrade Trotsky, in thus raising the question of October, the question of the role played by our Party and by Lenin in the creation of the ideology underlying the October Revolution, himself forces us to deal with the question from all the standpoints which have been adopted by Comrade Trotsky during the history of the Bolshevik Party.

I am thus obliged to deal with the concrete question of Trotskyism and Bolshevism, and in doing this I refer to Comrade Trotsky's latest utterance merely as one of the clearest and most instructive examples of the general line pursued by Comrade Trotsky....

In 1916 Lenin wrote that life was already a decade ahead of Trotsky's magnificent theory. Now we can add another eight years. Does the circumstance that life has passed Trotsky's theory by for eighteen years justify Trotsky in claiming to be able to correct Leninism by Trotskyism?

Since life has passed Trotsky's theory by, Trotsky attempts in his books to not only correct Leninism, but life as well, and to prove by every art of which he is master that life follows Trotsky after all.

It is incumbent on the Party to show precisely the contrary, and to prove to not only Trotsky but every new member the necessity of "Bolshevizing Trotsky." How far has the Party succeeded in this?

#### *Trotsky in the Party. Our Errors. October According to Trotsky.*

We must differentiate between two aspects of Trotsky's activity. The one aspect is Comrade Trotsky as he carried out the instructions of the Party strictly and accurately, leaning with the other members of the Party on the totality of common political experience in the Party and on the whole party mass organisation, and carrying out this or that task or command of the Party. At this time Comrade Trotsky's deeds were splendid, and added many brilliant pages to his own history and that of the Party. But since Comrade Trotsky has come forward as individualist, believing that he and not the Party is in the right in the fundamental questions of revolution, and that Leninism must be improved by Trotskyism, we are obliged to see that other aspect of Comrade Trotsky which shows him to be no Bolshevik.

#### *Four Attempts Made by Comrade Trotsky at Improving the Party.*

The Party remembers four occasions upon which Comrade Trotsky has tried to instruct the Party, and to force upon it his own Trotskyite deviations. The first occasion was a few months after Comrade Trotsky entered the Party. It was at the time of Brest Litovsk. The Party is adequately and accurately informed as to Comrade Trotsky's attitude at that time.

He underestimated the role played by the peasantry, and covered this over by revolutionary phraseology. This was the road to the defeat of the proletariat and the Revolution. If we recollect the evidence brought at this time against Comrade Trotsky by Comrade Lenin, we see the Comrade Lenin brought no other evidence than the substantiation with which he had rejected Comrade Trotsky's general attitude during the course of the preceding decade.

Comrade Lenin reproached him with two political sins: lack of comprehension of the relations between proletariat and peasantry, and liability to be carried away by apparently left, apparently revolutionary phrases. These two errors, typical of Comrade Trotsky while outside of our Party, were repeated by him within it.

Then came the Civil War, the epoch of War Communism. Comrade Trotsky executed the task allotted to him. His participation in the direction of the general policy of the Party was less than before. But now the Revolution reached a fresh turning point. The relations between the classes shifted. The Party anticipated, in the form of a discussion on trade unions, the question submitted a few weeks later at Kronstadt; the question of the transition from War Communism to the New Economic Policy. What was Comrade Lenin seeking for at that time? He was seeking new forms for an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, new forms for leading the working masses by means of gaining their convinced adherence rather than by force.

To what did Comrade Trotsky look for salvation at that time? He advised us to tighten the screws of War Communism. This was again and again an underestimation of the peasantry, the liability to be carried away by externals, by methods of "pressure" and "administration from above."

And Comrade Trotsky's further attempts—even during Comrade Lenin's lifetime—the question of the "plan" according to his peculiar conception, his "formulas" on the "dictatorship of industry," were not these again attempts to force petty bourgeois mentality upon us from above with bonds of iron, did they not once more show that lack of comprehension of those concrete conditions under which it is alone possible to realise a dictatorship in an agrarian country with weak industries at a time when the international revolution is retarded?

Beneath Comrade Trotsky's formulas we can here easily distinguish the feelings inevitably inspired by his original theory. On the one hand despair, pessimism, disbelief, and on the other hand exaggerated hopes in the methods of supreme administration (a term of Lenin's), in the ability to solve economic difficulties from above.

The last discussion is still fresh in our memories. It gave the Party a graphic survey of the totality of Comrade Trotsky's errors, as dealt with above. But it also showed with special clarity another error, another feature of Trotskyism, and one far from being new. This is the attempt to undermine and weaken the main framework of the dictatorship, the Party. The same object was aimed at by the discrediting of the "cadres" of the Party, by the resurrected Menshevik conception of the Party as a collection of "groups and currents," and the essentially "liquidator" undermining of the authority of the leading institutions ("they are leading the country to destruction"). And has it not been under Comrade Trotsky's banner that the idea of greater freedom from party influence for extra-party organisations has flourished? Has not all this, taken together, led to a weakening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and has it not all been based upon an underestimation of the conditions under which we—in an agrarian country—have to realise the dictatorship? Is it not a petty-bourgeois deviation?

So long as the Party is perfectly sound and everything goes well, Comrade Trotsky quietly performs every task which falls to him; but as soon as the Party encounters any obstacle, as soon as it has to adjust its rudder, then, Comrade Trotsky at once springs forward in the role of saviour and teacher of the Party, but invariably points out the wrong way, since he has not absorbed the principled of Bolshevism.

Comrade Trotsky has another trump in his hand against Bolshevism. This trump consists of certain errors committed by some few Bolsheviks (above all by me and Zinoviev, then those of Rykov and Nogin) in October 1917. The errors of the Bolsheviks are naturally invariable exploited by our enemies. Comrade Trotsky did not resort to this trump so long as he hoped to induce the Party to deviate to the path of Trotskyism by means of the discussion of this or that practical question. But after four attempts—Brest, trade unions, discussion on the economic plan, and the last discussion—had shown him that he cannot persuade the Bolshevik Party to deviate from its path, after he had learned from the Party at the XIII Party Conference that we, the Leninists, do not require our theory to be corrected by Trotskyism, then he brought forward this last trump.

He is of course not the first to do this. These errors have been exploited often enough already by our enemies, but both errors and exploitation were simply buried beneath the thunders of the proletarian revolution. At the time neither the errors themselves nor their being made use of by hostile quarters resulted in any practical consequences. It is only since then that these errors have been raked up again maliciously by those who had deserted Communism: Levi, Frossard, Balabanova. Levi and Frossard are now being followed by Trotsky.

Vacillations were unallowable. Lenin armed himself against them with all the power and passion of a leader who sees that his co-workers are liable to carry confusion into their own ranks by vacillation at decisive moments. He exposed every vacillation relentlessly, and in critical and decisive moments he did not shrink from the severest words or propositions. And he was right, right to the end, without reservation.

But when the moment for calm discussion arrived, the moment for the avoidance of the repetition of similar errors in other Communist parties, then Lenin characterised these errors very accurately. When Serrati attempted to cloak his withdrawal from Communism by these errors of Zinoviev and Kamenev, Comrade Lenin wrote: "Before the October Revolution in Russia, and immediately after it, a number of excellent Communists committed errors which we do not like to remember now. Why do we not like to remember them? Because it is wrong to call to mind errors which have been made perfectly good, unless there is some special reason for doing so."

Special attention must be accorded to the manner in which Lenin formulated our errors: "In the period of which I speak they vacillated, fearing that the Bolsheviks were isolating themselves, were rushing too recklessly into a rising, were too unwilling to meet the advances of a certain section of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries. The conflict went so far that the comrades named resigned demonstratively from all responsible positions both in the Party and in Soviet work, to the great joy of the enemies of the Soviet Revolution. The affair culminated in a very severe criticism in the press, on the part of the C.C. of our Party, against the resigning comrades. And after a few weeks, at latest after a few months, all these comrades recognized their error and returned to their responsible party and soviet positions."

Is this description of Lenin in any way similar to the malicious attempt made by Trotsky—ridiculous in its malice—to twist this "right" wing into an actually "Menshevik" wing in the Bolshevik Party? But this appears to be Comrade Trotsky's fate: In order to attain his objects he is invariably obliged to "overcome" Lenin, Leninism, and the Leninists....

What do these "Lessons of October" endeavour to teach us? That in the spring Lenin was obliged to alter his attitude, to abandon his old theory, and to borrow weapons from Trotsky's equipment. And that in October Lenin endeavoured unsuccessfully to lead the insurrection which Comrade Trotsky was destined to lead to victory.

We have to choose what we are to learn and to teach. Either this history of October, this history of Trotsky's, or the history as given in the works of Lenin.

In the question of the Constituent Assembly Comrade Trotsky quotes Zinoviev's and my letter of 11 October, in which we wrote: "The Constituent Assembly will be able to lean upon the Soviets only for aid in its revolutionary work. The Constituent Assembly and the Soviet form the combined type of state institutions towards which we are advancing."

Trotsky's comments as follows: "It is extremely interesting for the characterisation of the whole line adopted by the right to note that the theory of "combined" state institutions uniting the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets, is one which was repeated one or two years later in Germany by Rudolf Hilferding, an opponent of seizure of power by the proletariat."

Zinoviev's and my letter was written on 11 October; and I take it Lenin's article was written on 6 October. Lenin writes as follows: "During the transition from old to new combined types are possible at times (as the "Workers' Path" rightly pointed out a few days ago), for instance Soviet Republic and Constituent Assembly."

What does this imply? It implies that in the case before us Lenin resembled Hilferding. Historical truth is of little importance to Trotsky. The alteration of tactics at moments when the situation alters from day to day is of not interest to him; what interests him is to discredit Bolshevism by every possible means.

A final example, again in two words. In this same letter of October 1917 we wrote: "These masses of soldiers are not supporting us for the sake of the slogan of war, but for the slogan of peace.... Should we find ourselves in a position, after seizing power, in which the international situation obliges us to resort to a revolutionary war, the military will turn away from us. The best of the youth among the soldiers will remain true to us, but the great mass will leave us." The historian may judge in how far this estimate was justified. But what does Comrade Trotsky do? He writes: "Here we see fundamental arguments in favour of the signing of the Brest-Litovsk peace."

Thus it appears that the Brest Litovsk peace, signed by the Party on the urging and iron pressure of Lenin, against Trotsky, was substantiated by "fundamental arguments" supplied by us, the "Right," the followers of Hilferding. It is not to be wondered at when our enemies, who have a very fine feeling for anything wrong, comment on such books about Lenin by remarking that it is difficult to distinguish whether they have been written by a co-worker or a rival of Lenin.

### *Leninism against Trotskyism*

The results may now be summed up. We are the monopoly party in our country. We gather together in our ranks every organised worker in the country; but we must not forget for a moment that we are surrounded by elements foreign to our class, and that these elementary forces do not diminish, but will multiply and become politically more enlightened. They do not possess the form of legal organisation. Petty-bourgeois intelligence will also grow on the soil provided by the development of industry, of the works and factories, and of trade. All these petty-bourgeois elements, finding no open means of expression in any social organisation, are naturally endeavouring to further their aims through the medium of our Party itself. The petty-bourgeois elements, in exercising this pressure upon our Party, naturally seek the weakest link in the chain, and as naturally they find this weakest link where people have entered the Party without being assimilated to it, and are possessed by a secret conviction, leaving them no peace, that they are more in the right than the Party, and that it is mere narrow-mindedness on the part of the Party, mere conservatism, tradition, and adherence to this or that clique in leading positions, which prevents the Party from learning from its real saviours, such as Comrade Trotsky.

It is with great regret that I state this, and the whole Party will echo this regret, but it has to be said: Comrade Trotsky has become the channel through which the elementary forces of the petty-bourgeoisie find their way into our Party. The whole character of his



advances, and his whole historical past, show this to be the case. In his contentions against the Party he has already become a symbol, all over the country, for everything directed against our Party. This is a fact which it is most important for Comrade Trotsky to grasp. If he will grasp this and draw the necessary conclusions, then everything can be made good again. Whether he wants it or not (and assuredly he does *not* want it) he has become, for all who regard Communism as their greatest enemy, a symbol for emancipation from the thrall of the Communist Party. This is the regrettable but perfectly inevitable conclusion of all who are accustomed to judge political events from the standpoint of actual analysis of class relations, and not from the standpoint of mere words....

*International Press Correspondence*, IV, No. 89 (30 December 1924): 1026-1037, and quickly reprinted together with essays by Stalin (following) and Zinoviev (not included here) as a booklet, G. Zinoviev, I. Stalin, L. Kamenev, *Leninism or Trotskyism*. This title is as printed in *Pravda*.



### STALIN—LENINISM OR TROTSKYISM?

19 November 1924

*Stalin spoke at the same meeting of the Central Council of Trade Unions where Kamenev gave his speech (article above) the second time. Not having been as directly the target of Trotsky's version of the Revolution, he could focus more on attacking Trotsky's interpretation of 1917. In particular he devoted more attention than the others defining to "Trotskyism." Although acknowledging that Trotsky had played an important role in October, he undertook at the same time to denigrate Trotsky's importance in the Revolution. This was the first step in what was to become an ongoing process by Stalin of rewriting the history of the Revolution to downplay the role of his rival and emphasize his own. The speech was published in Pravda on 26 November. It is abridged for reasons of space.*

J. V. Stalin

#### *Trotskyism or Leninism?*

Comrades, after Kamenev's comprehensive report there is little left for me to say. I shall therefore confine myself to exposing certain legends that are being spread by Trotsky and his supporters about the October uprising, about Trotsky's role in the uprising, about the Party and the preparation for October, and so forth. I shall also touch upon Trotskyism as a peculiar ideology that is incompatible with Leninism, and upon the Party's tasks in connection with Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements.

### I

#### THE FACTS ABOUT THE OCTOBER UPRISING

First of all about the October uprising. Rumours are being vigorously spread among members of the Party that the Central Committee as a whole was opposed to an uprising in October 1917. The usual story is that on October 10, when the Central Committee adopted the decision to organise the uprising, the majority of the Central Committee at first spoke against an uprising, but, so the story runs, at the moment a worker burst in on the meeting of the Central Committee and said "You are deciding against an uprising, but I tell you that there will be an uprising all the same, in spite of everything." And so, after that

threat, the story runs, the Central Committee, which is alleged to have become frightened, raised the question of an uprising afresh and adopted a decision to organise it.

This is not merely a rumour, comrades. It is related by the well known John Reed in his book *Ten Days*. Reed was remote from our Party and, of course, could not know the history of our secret meeting on October 10, and, consequently, he was taken in by the gossip spread by people like Sukhanov. This story was later passed around and repeated in a number of pamphlets written by Trotskyites, including one of the latest pamphlets on October written by Syrkin. These rumours have been strongly supported in Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements.

It scarcely needs proof that all these and similar "Arabian Nights" fairy tales are not in accordance with the truth, that in fact nothing of the kind happened, nor could have happened, at the meeting of the Central Committee. Consequently, we could ignore these absurd rumours; after all, lots of rumours are fabricated in the office rooms of the oppositionists or those who are remote from the Party. Indeed, we have ignored them till now; for example, we paid no attention to John Reed's mistakes and did not take the trouble to rectify them. After Trotsky's latest pronouncements, however, it is no longer possible to ignore such legends, for attempts are being made now to bring up our young people on them and, unfortunately, some results have already been achieved in this respect. In view of this, I must counter these absurd rumours with the actual facts.

I take the minutes of the meeting of the Central Committee of our Party on October 10(23), 1917. Present: Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin, Trotsky, Sverdlov, Uritsky, Dzerzhinsky, Kollontai, Bubnov, Sokolnikov, Lomov. The question of the current situation and the uprising was discussed. After the discussion, Comrade Lenin's resolution on the uprising was put to the vote. The resolution was adopted by a majority of 10 against 2. Clear, one would think: by a majority of 10 against 2, the Central Committee decided to proceed with the immediate, practical work of organising the uprising. At this very same meeting the Central Committee elected a *political* centre to direct the uprising; this centre, called the Political Bureau, consisted of Lenin, Zinoviev, Stalin, Kamenev, Trotsky, Sokolnikov and Bubnov.

Such are the facts.

These minutes at one stroke destroy several legends. They destroy the legend that the majority on the Central Committee was opposed to an uprising. They also destroy the legend that on the question of the uprising the Central Committee was on the verge of a split. It is clear from the minutes that the opponents of an immediate uprising—Kamenev and Zinoviev—were elected to the body that was to exercise political direction of the uprising on a par with those who were in favour of an uprising. There was no question of a split, nor could there be.

Trotsky asserts that in October our Party had a right wing in the persons of Kamenev and Zinoviev, who, he says, were almost Social-Democrats. What one cannot understand then is how, under those circumstances, it could happen that the Party avoided a split; how it could happen that the disagreements with Kamenev and Zinoviev lasted only a few days; how it could happen that, in spite of those disagreements, the Party appointed these comrades to highly important posts, elected them to the political centre of the uprising, and so forth. Lenin's implacable attitude towards Social-Democrats is sufficiently well known in the Party; the Party knows that Lenin would not for a single moment have agreed to have Social-Democratically-minded comrades in the Party, let alone in highly important posts. How, then, are we to explain the fact that the Party avoided a split? The explanation is that in spite of the disagreements, these comrades were old Bolsheviks who stood on the common ground of Bolshevism. What was that common ground? Unity of views on the fundamental questions: the character of the Russian revolution, the driving forces of the revolution, the role of the peasantry, the principles of Party leadership, and so forth. Had there

not been this common ground, a split would have been inevitable. There was no split, and the disagreements lasted only a few days, because, and only because, Kamenev and Zinoviev were Leninists, Bolsheviks.

Let us now pass to the legend about Trotsky's special role in the October uprising. The Trotskyites are vigorously spreading rumours that Trotsky inspired and was the sole leader of the October uprising. These rumours are being spread with exceptional zeal by the so-called editor of Trotsky's works, Lentsner. Trotsky himself, by consistently avoiding mention of the Party, the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee of the Party, by saying nothing about the leading role of these organisations in the uprising and vigorously pushing himself forward as the central figure in the October uprising, voluntarily or involuntarily helps to spread the rumours about the special role he is supposed to have played in the uprising. I am far from denying Trotsky's undoubtedly important role in the uprising. I must say, however, that Trotsky did not play any special role in the October uprising, nor could he do so; being chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, he merely carried out the will of the appropriate Party bodies, which directed every step that Trotsky took. To philistines like Sukhanov, all this may seem strange, but the facts, the true facts, wholly and fully confirm what I say.

Let us take the minutes of the next meeting of the Central Committee, the one held on October 16(29), 1917. Present: the members of the Central Committee, plus representatives of the Petrograd Committee, plus representatives of the military organisation, factory committees, trade unions and the railwaymen. Among those present, besides the members of the Central Committee, were: Krylenko, Shotman, Kalinin, Volodarsky, Shlyapnikov, Lacin, and others, twenty-five in all. The question of the uprising was discussed from the purely practical-organisational aspect. Lenin's resolution on the uprising was adopted by a majority of 20 against 2, three abstaining. A *practical* centre was elected for the organisational leadership of the uprising. Who was elected to this centre? The following five: Sverdlov, Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, Bubnov, Uritsky. The functions of the practical centre: to direct all the practical organs of the uprising in conformity with the directives of the Central Committee. Thus, as you see, something "terrible" happened at this meeting of the Central Committee, i.e., "strange to relate," the "inspirer," the "chief figure," the "sole leader" of the uprising, Trotsky, was not elected to the practical centre, which was called upon to direct the uprising. How is this to be reconciled with the current opinion about Trotsky's special role? Is not all this somewhat "strange," as Sukhanov, or the Trotskyites, would say? And yet, strictly speaking, there is nothing strange about it, for neither in the Party, nor in the October uprising, did Trotsky play any *special* role, nor could he do so, for he was a relatively new man in our Party in the period of October. He, like all the responsible workers, merely carried out the will of the Central Committee and of its organs. Whoever is familiar with the mechanics of Bolshevik Party leadership will have no difficulty in understanding that it could not be otherwise: it would have been enough for Trotsky to have gone against the will of the Central Committee to have been deprived of influence on the course of events. This talk about Trotsky's special role is a legend that is being spread by obliging "Party" gossips.

This, of course, does not mean that the October uprising did not have its inspirer. It did have its inspirer and leader, but this was Lenin, and none other than Lenin, that same Lenin whose resolutions the Central Committee adopted when deciding the question of the uprising, that same Lenin who, in spite of what Trotsky says, was not prevented by being in hiding from being the actual inspirer of the uprising. It is foolish and ridiculous to attempt now, by gossip about Lenin having been in hiding, to obscure the indubitable fact that the inspirer of the uprising was the leader of the Party, V. I. Lenin.

Such are the facts.

Granted, we are told, but it cannot be denied that Trotsky fought well in the period of October. Yes, that is true, Trotsky did, indeed, fight well in October; but Trotsky was not

the only one who fought well in the period of October. Even people like the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who then stood side by side with the Bolsheviks, also fought well. In general, I must say that in the period of a victorious uprising, when the enemy is isolated and the uprising is growing, it is not difficult to fight well. At such moments even backward people become heroes.

The proletarian struggle is not, however, an uninterrupted advance, an unbroken chain of victories. The proletarian struggle also has its trials, its defeats. The genuine revolutionary is not one who displays courage in the period of a victorious uprising, but one who, while fighting well during the victorious advance of the revolution, also displays courage when the revolution is in retreat, when the proletariat suffers defeat; who does not lose his head and does not funk when the revolution suffers reverses, when the enemy achieves success; who does not become panic-stricken or give way to despair when the revolution is in a period of retreat. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries did not fight badly in the period of October, and they supported the Bolsheviks. But who does not know that those "brave" fighters became panic-stricken in the period of Brest, when the advance of German imperialism drove them to despair and hysteria. It is a very sad but indubitable fact that Trotsky, who fought well in the period of October, did not, in the period of Brest, in the period when the revolution suffered temporary reverses, possess the courage to display sufficient staunchness at that difficult moment and to refrain from following in the footsteps of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Beyond question, that moment was a difficult one; one had to display exceptional courage and imperturbable coolness not to be dismayed, to retreat in good time, to accept peace in good time, to withdraw the proletarian army out of range of the blows of German imperialism, to preserve the present reserves and, after obtaining a respite in this way, to strike at the enemy with renewed force. Unfortunately, Trotsky was found to lack this courage and revolutionary staunchness at that difficult moment.

In Trotsky's opinion, the principal lesson of the proletarian revolution is "not to funk" during October. That is wrong, for Trotsky's assertion contains only a *particle* of the truth about the lessons of the revolution. The *whole* truth about the lessons of the proletarian revolution is "not to funk" not only when the revolution is advancing, but also when it is in retreat, when the enemy is gaining the upper hand and the revolution is suffering reverses. The revolution did not end with October. October was only the beginning of the proletarian revolution. It is bad to funk when the tide of insurrection is rising; but it is worse to funk when the revolution is passing through severe trials after power has been captured. To retain power on the morrow of the revolution is no less important than to capture power. If Trotsky funk during the period of Brest, when our revolution was passing through severe trials, when it was almost a matter of "surrendering" power, he ought to know that the mistakes committed by Kamenev and Zinoviev in October are quite irrelevant here.

That is how matters stand with the legends about the October uprising.

## II

### THE PARTY AND THE PREPARATION FOR OCTOBER

Let us now pass to the question of the preparation for October.

Listening to Trotsky, one might think that during the whole of the period of preparation, from March to October, the Bolshevik Party did nothing but mark time; that it was being corroded by internal contractions and hindered Lenin in every way; that had it not been for Trotsky, nobody knows how the October Revolution would have ended. It is rather amusing to hear this strange talk about the Party from Trotsky, who declares in this same "preface" to Volume III that "the chief instrument of the proletarian revolution is the Party," that "without the Party, apart from the Party, by-passing the Party, with a substitute for the Party the proletarian revolution cannot be victorious." Allah himself would not understand

how our revolution could have succeeded if "its chief instrument" proved to be useless, while success was impossible, as it appears, "by-passing the Party." But this is not the first time that Trotsky treats us to oddities. It must be supposed that this amusing talk about our Party is one of Trotsky's usual oddities.

Let us briefly review the history of the preparation for October according to periods.

1) *The period of the Party's new orientation (March-April).* The major facts of this period:

- a) the overthrow of tsarism;
- b) the formation of the Provisional Government (dictatorship of the bourgeoisie);
- c) the appearance of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry);
- d) dual power;
- e) the April demonstration;
- f) the first crisis of power.

The characteristic feature of this period is the fact that there existed together, side by side and simultaneously, both the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry; the latter trusts the former, believes that it is striving for peace, voluntarily surrenders power to the bourgeoisie and thereby becomes an appendage of the bourgeoisie. There are as yet no serious conflicts between the two dictatorships. On the other hand, there is the "Contact Committee."

This was the greatest turning point in the history of Russia and an unprecedented turning point in the history of our Party. The old, pre-revolutionary platform of direct overthrow of the government was clear and definite, but it was no longer suitable for the new conditions of the struggle. It was now no longer possible to go straight out for the overthrow of the government, for the latter was connected with the Soviets, then under the influence of the defencists, and the Party would have had to wage war against both the government and the Soviets, a war that would have been beyond its strength. Nor was it possible to pursue a policy of supporting the Provisional Government, for it was the government of imperialism. Under the new conditions of the struggle the Party had to adopt a new orientation. The Party (its majority) groped its way towards this new orientation. It adopted the policy of pressure on the Provisional Government through the Soviets on the question of peace and did not venture to step forward at once from the old slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to the new slogan of power to the Soviets. The aim of this halfway policy was to enable the Soviets to discern the actual imperialist nature of the Provisional Government on the basis of the concrete questions of peace, and in this way to wrest the Soviets from the Provisional Government. But this was a profoundly mistaken position, for it gave rise to pacifist illusion, brought grist to the mill of defencism and hindered the revolutionary education of the masses. At that time I shared this mistaken position with other Party comrades and fully abandoned it only in the middle of April, when I associated myself with Lenin's theses. A new orientation was needed. This new orientation was given to the Party by Lenin, in his celebrated April Theses....

(2) *The period of the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses (May-August)....*

Were there disagreements in our Party then? Yes, there were. They were, however, of a purely practical character, despite the assertions of Trotsky, who is trying to discover a "Right" and a "Left" wing in the Party. That is to say, they were such disagreements as are inevitable where there is vigorous Party life and real Party activity.

Trotsky is wrong in asserting that the April demonstration in Petrograd gave rise to disagreements in the Central Committee....

Trotsky is absolutely wrong in speaking about "tragic" disagreements in the Central Committee in connection with the July armed demonstration....

Trotsky is wrong in declaring that during the Kornilov days a section of the Party leaders inclined towards the formation of a bloc with the defencists, toward supporting the Provisional Government....

## III

## TROTSKYISM OR LENINISM?

We have dealt above with the legends directed against the Party and those about Lenin spread by Trotsky and his supporters in connection with October and the preparation for it. We have exposed and refuted these legends. But the question arises: For what purpose did Trotsky need all these legends about October and the preparation for October, about Lenin and the Party of Lenin? What is the purpose of Trotsky's new literary pronouncements against the Party? What is the sense, the purpose, the aim of these pronouncements now, when the Party does not want a discussion, when the Party is busy with a host of urgent tasks, when the Party needs united efforts to restore our economy and not a new struggle around old questions? For what purpose does Trotsky need to drag the Party back, to new discussions?

Trotsky asserts that all this is needed for the purpose of "studying" October. But is it not possible to study October without giving another kick at the Party and its leader Lenin? What sort of a "history" of October is it that begins and ends with attempts to discredit the chief leader of the October uprising, to discredit the Party, which organised and carried through the uprising? No, it is not a matter here of studying October. *That* is not the way to study October. *That* is not the way to write the history of October. Obviously, there is a different "design" here, and everything goes to show that this "design" is that Trotsky by his literary pronouncements is making another (yet another!) attempt to create the conditions for substituting Trotskyism for Leninism. Trotsky needs "desperately" to discredit the Party, and its cadres who carried through the uprising, in order, after discrediting the Party, to proceed to discredit Leninism. And it is necessary for him to discredit Leninism in order to drag in Trotskyism as the "sole" "proletarian" (don't laugh!) ideology. All this, of course (oh, of course!) under the flag of Leninism, so that the dragging operation may be performed "as painlessly as possible."

That is the essence of Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements.

That is why those literary pronouncements of Trotsky's sharply raise the question of Trotskyism.

And so, what is Trotskyism?

Trotskyism possesses three specific features which bring it into irreconcilable contradiction with Leninism.

What are these features?

*Firstly.* Trotskyism is the theory of "permanent" (uninterrupted) revolution. But what is permanent revolution in its Trotskyist interpretation? It is revolution that fails to take the poor peasantry into account as a revolutionary force. Trotsky's "permanent" revolution is, as Lenin said, "skipping" the peasant movement, "playing at the seizure of power." Why is it dangerous? Because such a revolution, if an attempt had been made to bring it about, would inevitably have ended in failure, for it would have divorced from the Russian proletariat its ally, the poor peasantry. This explains the struggle that Leninism has been waging against Trotskyism ever since 1905.

How does Trotsky appraise Leninism from the standpoint of this struggle? He regards it as a theory that possesses "anti-revolutionary features." What is this indignant opinion about Leninism based on? On the fact that at the proper time Leninism advocated and upheld the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and *peasantry*.

But Trotsky does not confine himself to this indignant opinion. He goes further and asserts: "The entire edifice of Leninism at the present time is built on lies and falsification and bears within itself the poisonous elements of its own decay" (see Trotsky's letter to Chkheidze, 1913). As you see, we have before us two opposite lines.

*Secondly.* Trotskyism is distrust of the Bolshevik Party principle, of the monolithic character of the Party, of its hostility towards opportunist elements. In the sphere of organisation, Trotskyism is the theory that revolutionaries and opportunists can co-exist and

form groups and coteries within a single party. You are, no doubt, familiar with the history of Trotsky's August bloc, in which the Martovites and Otszovists, the Liquidators and Trotskyites, happily co-operated, pretending that they were a "real" party. It is well known that this patchwork "party" pursued the aim of destroying the Bolshevik Party. What was the nature of "our disagreements" at that time? It was that Leninism regarded the destruction of the August bloc as a guarantee of the development of the proletarian party, whereas Trotskyism regarded that bloc as the basis for building a "real" party.

Again, as you see, we have two opposite lines.

*Thirdly.* Trotskyism is distrust of the leaders of Bolshevism, an attempt to discredit, to defame them. I do not know of a single trend in the Party that could compare with Trotskyism in the matter of discrediting the leaders of Leninism or the central institutions of the Party. For example, what should be said of Trotsky's "polite" opinion of Lenin, whom he described as "a professional exploiter of every kind of backwardness in the Russian working-class movement" (*ibid.*)? And this is far from being the most "polite" of the "polite" opinions Trotsky has expressed.

How could it happen that Trotsky, who carried such a nasty stock-in-trade on his back, found himself, after all, in the ranks of the Bolsheviks during the October movement? It happened because at that time Trotsky abandoned (actually did abandon) that stock-in-trade; he hid it in the cupboard. Had he not performed that "operation," real co-operation with him would have been impossible. The theory of the August bloc, i.e., the theory of unity with the Mensheviks, had already been shattered and thrown overboard by the revolution, for how could there be any talk about unity when an armed struggle was raging between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks? Trotsky had no alternative but to admit that this theory was useless.

The same misadventure "happened" to the theory of permanent revolution, for not a single Bolshevik contemplated the immediate seizure of power on the morrow of the February Revolution, and Trotsky could not help knowing that the Bolsheviks would not allow him, in the words of Lenin, "to play at the seizure of power." Trotsky had no alternative but recognise the Bolsheviks' policy of fighting of influence in the Soviets, of fighting to win over the peasantry. As regards the third specific feature of Trotskyism (distrust of the Bolshevik leaders), it naturally had to retire into the background owing to the obvious failure of the first two features.

Under those circumstances, could Trotsky do anything else but hide his stock-in-trade in the cupboard and follow the Bolsheviks, considering that he had not group of his own of any significance, and that he came to the Bolsheviks as a political individual, without an army? Of course, he could not!

What is the lesson to be learnt from this? Only one: that prolonged collaboration between the Leninists and Trotsky is possible only if the latter completely abandons his old stock-in-trade, only if he completely accepts Leninism. Trotsky writes about the lessons of October, but he forgets that, in addition to all the other lessons, there is one more lesson of October, the one I have just mentioned, which is of prime importance for Trotskyism. Trotskyism ought to learn that lesson of October too.

It is evident, however, that Trotskyism has not learnt that lesson. The fact of the matter is that the old stock-in-trade of Trotskyism that was hidden in the cupboard in the period of the October movement is now being dragged into the light again in the hope that a market will be found for it, seeing that the market in our country is expanding. Undoubtedly, Trotsky's new literary pronouncements are an attempt to revert to Trotskyism, to "overcome" Leninism, to drag in, implant, all the specific features of Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism is not a mere repetition of the old Trotskyism; its feathers have been plucked and it is rather bedraggled; it is incomparably milder in spirit and more moderate in form than the old Trotskyism; but, in essence, it undoubtedly retains all the specific features of

the old Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism does not dare to come out as a militant force against Leninism; it prefers to operate under the common flag of Leninism, under the slogan of interpreting, improving Leninism. That is because it is weak. It cannot be regarded as an accident that the appearance of the new Trotskyism coincided with Lenin's departure. In Lenin's lifetime it would not have dared to take this risky step.

What are the characteristic features of the new Trotskyism?

1) *On the question of "permanent" revolution.* The new Trotskyism does not deem it necessary openly to uphold the theory of "permanent" revolution. It "simply" asserts that the October Revolution fully confirmed the ideal of "permanent" revolution. From this it draws the following conclusion: the important and acceptable part of Leninism is the part that came after the war, in the period of the October Revolution; on the other hand, the part of Leninism that existed before the war, before the October Revolution, is wrong and unacceptable. Hence, the Trotskyites' theory of the division of Leninism into two parts: pre-war Leninism, the "old," "useless" Leninism with its idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, and the new, post-war, October Leninism, which they count on adapting to the requirements of Trotskyism. Trotskyism needs this theory of the division of Leninism as a first, more or less "acceptable" step that is necessary to facilitate further steps in its struggle against Leninism.

But Leninism is not an eclectic theory stuck together out of diverse elements and capable of being cut into parts. Leninism is an integral theory, which arose in 1903, has passed the test of three revolutions, and is now being carried forward as the battle-flag of the world proletariat.

"Bolshevism," Lenin said, "as a trend of political thought and as a political party, has existed since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the *whole* period of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it was able to build up and to maintain under most difficult conditions the iron discipline needed for the victory of the proletariat" (see Vol. XXV, p. 174).

Bolshevism and Leninism are one. They are two names for one and the same thing. Hence, the theory of the division of Leninism into two parts is a theory intended to destroy Leninism, to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism.

Needless to say, the Party cannot reconcile itself to this grotesque theory.

2) *On the question of the Party principle.* The old Trotskyism tried to undermine the Bolshevik Party principle by means of the theory (and practice) of unity with the Mensheviks. But that theory has suffered such disgrace that nobody now even wants to mention it. To undermine the Party principle, present-day Trotskyism has invented the new, less odious and almost "democratic" theory of contrasting the old cadres to the younger Party element. According to Trotskyism, our Party has not a single and integral history. Trotskyism divides the history of our Party into two parts of unequal importance: pre-October and post-October. The pre-October part of the history of our Party is, properly speaking, not history, but "pre-history," the unimportant or, at all events, not very important preparatory period of our Party. The post-October part of the history of our Party, however, is real, genuine history. In the former, there are the "old," "pre-historic," unimportant cadres of our Party. In the latter there is the new, real, "historic" Party. It scarcely needs proof that this singular scheme of the history of the Party is a scheme to disrupt the unity between the old and the new cadres of our Party, a scheme to destroy the Bolshevik Party principle.

Needless to say, the Party cannot reconcile itself to this grotesque scheme.

3) *On the question of the leaders of Bolshevism.* The old Trotskyism tried to discredit Lenin more or less openly, without fearing the consequences. The new Trotskyism is more cautious. It tries to achieve the purpose of the old Trotskyism by pretending to praise, to exalt Lenin....



What is the danger of the new Trotskyism? It is that Trotskyism, owing to its entire inner content, stands every chance of becoming the centre and rallying point of the non-proletarian elements who are striving to weaken, to disintegrate the proletarian dictatorship.

You will ask: what is to be done now? What are the Party's immediate tasks in connection with Trotsky's new literary pronouncements?

Trotskyism is taking action now in order to discredit Bolshevism and to undermine its foundations. It is the duty of the Party *to bury Trotskyism as an ideological trend*.

There is talk about repressive measures against the opposition and about the possibility of a split. That is nonsense, comrades. Our Party is strong and mighty. It will not allow any splits. As regards repressive measures, I am emphatically opposed to them. What we need now is not repressive measures, but an extensive ideological struggle against re-nascent Trotskyism.

We did not want and did not strive for this literary discussion. Trotskyism is forcing it upon us by its anti-Leninist pronouncements. Well, we are ready, comrades.

Stalin, *Works*, VI: 339-73.



## CHAMBERLAIN ELABORATES BRITISH OBJECTION TO SOVIET BEHAVIOR

21 November 1924

*Austen Chamberlain, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the new Conservative Party government, responded to Rakovsky's letter of October 25 (see above). He broadened the base of British objection from the "Zinoviev Letter" alone to the whole body of revolutionary propaganda made by the Comintern "with the knowledge and consent of the Soviet Government." This was accompanied by another note stating that the British government would not ratify the trade and other agreements worked out in August 1924. See Rakovsky's responses, November 28, below.*

*Mr. Austen Chamberlain to M. Rakovsky*

Foreign Office, November 21, 1924

I HAVE had under consideration your reply of the 25th October to the note which my predecessor addressed to you with regard to the activities of the Communist International in this country.

2. In the third paragraph of that reply you undertook to declare, apparently upon internal evidence alone and without allowing any time for any reference to Moscow, that the letter from M. Zinoviev, which was the occasion of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's representations, was a gross forgery. In support of this assertion you alleged that the Communist International is never described in its own circulars as the "Third Communist International," that M. Zinoviev never signs as "President of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International," but always as "President of the Executive Committee," and that the whole of the contents are, from a Communist point of view, a tissue of absurdities.

3. His Majesty's Government cannot accept these assertions, which are disproved by reference to the official publications and daily press of the Union.

4. But it is unnecessary to go into these details, for the information in the possession of His Majesty's Government leaves no doubt whatsoever in their mind of the authenticity of M. Zinoviev's letter, and His Majesty's Government are therefore not prepared to discuss the matter.

5. I must further observe that you would entirely misapprehend the character of the representations made to you by my predecessor if you supposed that they dealt with M. Zinoviev's letter only. The activities of which His Majesty's Government complain are not confined to one particular letter, but, on the contrary, extend to a whole body of revolutionary propaganda of which the letter is a fair specimen, and which is sometimes conducted in secret and sometimes, as you rightly remark, not concealed. The pronouncements of M. Zinoviev, which have been broadcast throughout the world, are in themselves sufficient evidence of propaganda in which the Third International, with the knowledge and consent of the Soviet Government, perpetually indulges; and it is this system which, in the view of His Majesty's Government, is inconsistent with the solemn undertakings given by your Government.

6. In his note of the 24th October, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald observed that "no one who understands the constitution and the relationships of the Communist International will doubt its intimate connection and contact with the Soviet Government." He further observed that "no Government would ever tolerate an arrangement with a foreign Government by which the latter is in formal diplomatic relations of a correct kind with it, whilst at the same time a propagandist body organically connected with that foreign Government encourages, and even orders, subjects of the former to plot and plan revolutions for its overthrow." This is true, and the Soviet Government would do well to weigh carefully the consequences of ignoring this pronouncement.

I have, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

U. K. *A Selection of Papers dealing with the Relations between His Majesty's Government and the Soviet Government, 1917-1927*, Cmd. 2895: 34-35.



SOVIET REPLY TO CHAMBERLAIN'S NOTE AND  
DENUNCIATION OF THE "ZINOVIEV LETTER"

28 November 1924

*Christian Rakovsky, the Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain, in a note to Foreign Secretary Austin Chamberlain, vigorously denied the authenticity of the "Zinoviev Letter" and various British allegations about Soviet government behavior, especially concerning the Comintern. Rakovsky repeated the proposals put forth by the Soviet government, in its initial response on October 27, for an impartial arbitration regarding the letters' authenticity. See above November 21 (Chamberlain's note) and October 24 and 25.*

[Rakovsky to Chamberlain]

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Note of 21 November and of Mr. Gregory's letter of the same date, with the contents of which I have acquainted my Government.

I am instructed by my Government to recall the following facts:

The alleged letter of Mr. Zinoviev addressed to the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain was the occasion for this correspondence, and for Mr. Gregory's Note of 24 October, handed to me on the evening of the same date, four days prior to the British elections. Immediately upon receipt of the above Note, I informed Mr. MacDonald in writing of my absolute conviction that the alleged letter from Mr. Zinoviev was a forgery. Further, in a Note to Mr. MacDonald on 27 October, I stated that, after having made careful investigation in Moscow, my Government had instructed me to declare categorically that the alleged 'Zinoviev letter' was an absolute forgery. In view of the very great attention given by British public opinion to this document, my Government, in order to remove any doubts whatsoever and in order to establish the unbiased truth, offered to submit the document in question for impartial investigation and arbitration.

During several weeks my Government received no reply to its offer. In the meantime many members of the British Government had publicly expressed their doubts as to the authenticity of the alleged document, and some of them had even expressed their conviction that it was a forgery. In view of the doubts existing in the matter, the British Government found it necessary after the election campaign to appoint an authoritative Committee of the Cabinet, including the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to examine the nature and origin of the document. This Committee established that neither the Government nor any of the Government Departments of Great Britain had seen any 'original document.' This fact was made public on 4 November. These curious circumstances explain why public opinion throughout the whole world considers the 'Zinoviev letter' as an undoubted forgery.

This declaration by an authoritative British Committee destroyed the grounds upon which was based the accusation made by Mr. Gregory against the Soviet Government in the height of the election campaign, and my Government was inclined to consider the declaration as an actual withdrawal of the accusation.

Indeed, the most elementary rules of jurisprudence forbid the making of accusations on the strength of copies of documents which have been neither verified nor certified by anyone and which no one of the accusers has ever seen.

It might be well to add that we understand that the delegation from the British Trade Union Congress, consisting of Messrs. Purcell, Tillett, Bromley, Findley, Bramley, Turner, and Smith, has, as a result of its investigations in Moscow into the authenticity of the 'Zinoviev letter,' unanimously come to the conclusion that 'the Delegation is absolutely convinced that the "document" is a forgery, that no evidence to the contrary can be produced, and that the refusal of the Russian offer of arbitration can only be explained on that ground.'

In view of the above, my Government expresses its extreme surprise that the present Government of Great Britain has found it possible completely to ignore the fact established by its predecessor and that, after having declined the offer for an investigation of the 'document' by an impartial court, it makes vague statements, unsupported by any evidence, that the 'document' is genuine. My Government cannot accept such unproved allegations.

My Government considers that it has even more reason for rejecting the unfounded allegations made by the British Government since in the past accusations have repeatedly been made against the Soviet Government based on documents which on closer examination were found to be forged, and of which even the origin has been established.

My Government considers as established and proved the fact that in a number of cities in Europe and America there exist organizations under the leadership of Russian counter-revolutionary emigrants and of other suspicious elements engaged especially in the fabricating of forged documents with a view to undermining the international position of the Soviet Union. Quite recently I have submitted to the Foreign Office documentary evidence at my disposal proving that on the territory of Great Britain there exist political

organizations engaged in the fabrication and distribution of false documents concerning the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics.

In the name of my Government I express my deep regret that the British Government should base political acts, having the most serious bearing upon the further relations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Great Britain, on unverified documents emanating from doubtful sources, and should thus place the relations between the two Governments on a very precarious foundation, in that it makes them dependent upon the action of malevolent and sinister persons and political organizations pursuing selfish aims. My Government considers that the declaration made by the British Cabinet Committee on 4 November as to the absence of the document referred to by Mr. Gregory in his Note of 24 October, fully disproves the accusation made by him. My Government cherishes the belief that the British Government will in future be more circumspect in its accusations, and that it will examine more carefully facts on which it bases official communication. If, however, the present Government wishes to ignore the statement made by the Cabinet Committee on 4 November, and reiterates the accusations based on a forged document, the Soviet Government, on its part, must insist on its offer of arbitration as the sole means to an unbiased settlement of this question. This offer was made in its Note of 27 October, which unfortunately was 'lost' on the change of Government in Great Britain, but the contents of which, according to Mr. Gregory's Note, are known to the present British Government. The British Government must be aware that the rejection of this offer of arbitration cannot but be considered by the public opinion of all countries as establishing that it is impossible for the British Government to substantiate and prove the accusations put forward during the election campaign.

Further, my Government regrets that in its Note of 21 November, the British Government evaded a direct reply on the question of arbitration on the concrete point at issue concerning the 'Zinoviev letter,' and that it thought fit to pass on to general accusations against the Soviet Government in connection with the activities of the Communist International. As regards these accusations I am instructed by my Government to reiterate the declarations repeatedly made as to the complete political and administrative independence of the Communist International from the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. My Government has never undertaken and cannot undertake to refuse the right of asylum to the Communist International, or to any other working-class organization, still less can it undertake to exercise pressure upon them. My Government considers any further discussion of attacks on international workers' organizations as useless and fruitless, and has requested me to declare that it has loyally carried out, and will in future carry out, on the principle of reciprocity, the obligations which it has undertaken.

*The Times*, 29 November 1924.



#### SOVIET RESPONSE TO THE BRITISH NOTE RENOUNCING THE TRADE TREATY

28 November 1924

*Among the casualties of the "Zinoviev Letter" and cooling in British-Soviet relations were the treaties concerning trade and other matters which had been signed in August but not ratified. The decision not to ratify them had been communicated to the Soviet government in a note from Mr. Gregory of the British Foreign Office. Ambassador Rakovsky responded with this note.*

## [Note of Rakovsky in Response to Mr. Gregory's Note]

I received, and acquainted my Government with, your Note of 21 November, in which the British Government transmits its refusal to advise the ratification of the general and commercial treaties of 8 August signed by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the British Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and by Mr. Arthur Ponsonby, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Soviet Government expresses its regret at the rejection of these treaties, the conclusion of which constituted an important step towards securing general peace and, in particular, towards the strengthening of friendly relations between the peoples of Great Britain and of the Soviet Republics.

I am directed by my Government to state that on its part it has displayed the maximum of good will and of concessions in connection with the working out of a basis of agreement on questions of particular interest to the British Government, to the working-class and to other sections of the British population. Therefore my Government cannot take any of the responsibility for the feeling of discontent which the decision of the British Government will cause in both countries.

*The Times*, 28 November 1924.



## PREOBRAZHENSKY, THE LAW OF PRIMITIVE SOCIALIST ACCUMULATION

November 1924

*One of the key problems facing the Soviet Union in the 1920s was how and where to find the capital resources necessary for industrial development, complicated by the need to have this occur within a socialist framework. The problem became more pressing toward the middle of the decade as the economic recovery began to reach the point where existing productive capacity had been put back to work. Preobrazhensky was perhaps the first Soviet leader to seriously examine the issues involved in the problem. Two broad approaches evolved. One, sometimes called the "super-industrializers," stressed the importance of rapid industrial growth. To find the necessary capital for this they looked to heavy taxation of the private sector, the peasants in particular. Preobrazhensky was perhaps the leading theorist of this approach, which he elaborated in writings of the 1920s. Central to his theory was the concept of "primitive socialist accumulation," set forth here in summary form. By forcibly "alienating part of the surplus product of pre-socialist forms of economy" the state could find the means to finance the socialist sector and industrialization. This meant in practice, as Preobrazhensky acknowledged, exploiting the peasantry. Preobrazhensky's argument assumed an extensive planned direction of the economy by the state. His analysis formed much of the economic basis for the opposition to NEP within the Party in the mid 1920s, and, ironically, for Stalin's industrialization drive at the end of the decade (by which time Preobrazhensky had been expelled from the Party). Preobrazhensky's essays sparked a direct rebuttal from Bukharin (see below, December 12), who was the main spokesman for the approach to economic development which relied more on continuing NEP and a close alliance with the peasants and, by implication, a slower pace of industrial development. This economic debate became increasingly intertwined with the political debates and the struggle for power because it bore so directly on fundamental decisions facing the Party and state. This essay was first published in Vestnik kommunicheskoi akademii, 1924, No. 8, and then reprinted in 1926 as Chapter Two of Novaia ekonomika (The New Economics). Abridged.*

E. Preobrazhensky  
*The New Economics*

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## II. THE LAW OF PRIMITIVE SOCIALIST ACCUMULATION

It would be no exaggeration to say that the most interesting and exciting question since the October revolution of 1917 and the military victory of the revolution, for all our practical and theoretical workers alike, is the question of what the Soviet system is, in what direction it is developing, what are the basic laws of development of this system, and, finally, what relation this first experience of an economy which, so far as its leading links are concerned, has gone beyond the confines of capitalism, bears to our old, familiar ideas about socialism. The last question should more correctly be put like this: how, after eight years of the dictatorship of the proletariat in an enormous country, should we look upon our former ideas about socialism?

Not a single economic formation can develop in a pure form, on the basis merely of the immanent laws which are inherent to the particular formation. This would be in contradiction to the very idea of development. The development of any economic form means its ousting of other economic forms, the subordination of these forms to the new form, and their gradual elimination. Under these conditions the diagonal of the parallelogram of forces operating in the economic field can never follow the line of the internal laws of the dominant form but will always deviate from this line under the influence of the resistant forces. And these resistant forces, that is, the forces of the other economic forms included in the given economic system, operate along the line of their own laws of development. These laws of development of the old forms are now changed simply into laws of resistance to the new form.

But analysis of an economic system in which two fundamental laws are operating is extremely difficult in a case where the historically progressive form is not the one which is already predominant in the economy but one which is only in course of becoming the predominant form. And that is just the position in our Soviet economic system. The difficulty, as will be explained in more detail later on, arises here in the analysis of the role of the third economic force—which in this particular case is petty production. During the civil war the cadres of socialism, that is, the working class and the rural poor, carried on a struggle for the masses of the middle peasantry against the cadres of capitalism, that is, the bourgeois-landlord, kulak, bureaucrat elements. In this struggle the middle peasantry, while constantly vacillating, in general came down on the side of the working class. This struggle has now been transferred to the economic field, in which petty production serves as the nutrient base for both capitalist and for socialist accumulation. The question whether disintegrating petty production is being transformed predominantly in a capitalist direction, separating into wage earners on one side and kulak economy on the other, or is being taken more and more into the periphery of the state economy, is one of very great importance for the fate of socialism in a peasant country. In the first case not only will the rate of development be slower but the methods of struggle by the socialist form against the capitalist form will be different; the whole economic structure will present a considerably different appearance. I do not speak of the important political consequences which will inevitably be associated with advance in accordance with this variant....

### *Primitive Accumulation, Capitalist and Socialist*

In order to understand the present phase of development of the Soviet economy it is extremely helpful to carry out a systematic comparison between the first steps of socialism and the first steps of the capitalist mode of production. This comparison is most instructive and will greatly assist us in our analysis. Both the similarity and the difference—and the differences are incomparably greater than the similarities—bring out remarkably well the special features of the Soviet system of economy.

Let us begin with the most important difference, which conditions a number of others.

Capitalist production arises and develops within the womb of feudal society, or of feudal society which has been half disintegrated by commodity economy, many decades before the bourgeois revolutions. This fully applies to the development of merchant capital, as the necessary preliminary stage of capitalist production. It applies also to the first steps of manufacture in England and to the first steps of capitalist machine industry on the Continent. Capitalism was able to pass through its period of primitive accumulation in the age of absolutism in politics and of simple commodity production and feudal-serfdom relations in the economic sphere.

Bourgeois revolutions begin after capitalism has gone far in building up its system in the economic sphere. The bourgeois revolution is only an episode in the process of bourgeois development, which begins long before the revolution and goes on more rapidly after it. The socialist system, on the contrary, begins its chronology with the seizure of power by the proletariat. This follows from the very essence of the socialist economy as a single complex which cannot be built up molecularly within the world of capitalism. While merchant capital could develop in the pores of feudal society, while the first capitalist enterprises could function without coming into irreconcilable contradiction with the existing political structure and property-forms (being, on the contrary, as we shall see below, nourished by their juices), the complex of state socialist production can appear only as a result of a breaking through of the old system all along the line, only as a result of social revolution. This fact is of colossal significance for understanding not only the genesis of socialism, but also the entire subsequent process of socialist construction. Conversely, insufficient understanding, or forgetting, of the essential nature of socialism has often led and still leads a number of comrades into a purely philistine, sometimes directly reformist conception of the Soviet economy and its paths of development....

As we have seen above, primitive capitalist accumulation could take place on the basis of feudalism, whereas socialist accumulation cannot take place on the basis of capitalism. Consequently, if socialism has a pre-history, this can begin only after the conquest of power by the proletariat. The nationalization of large-scale industry is also the first act of socialist accumulation, that is, the act which concentrates in the hands of the state the minimum resources needed for the organization of socialist leadership of industry. But it is just here that we come up against the other aspect of the question. In socializing large-scale production the proletarian state by that very act changes from the start the system of ownership of the means of production: it adapts the system of ownership to its future steps in the matter of socialist reconstruction of the whole economy. In other words, the working class acquires by revolution only that which capitalism already possessed in the shape of the institution of private property, without any revolution, on the basis of feudalism.<sup>2</sup> Primitive socialist accumulation, as a period of the creation of the material prerequisites for socialist production in the true sense of the word could begin only with the seizure of power and nationalization....

In the same way, socialist accumulation in the true sense of the word, that is, accumulation on the basis of a socialist economy which has already developed all its characteristic features and *the advantages peculiar to itself*, can begin only after Soviet economy has passed through the stage of primitive accumulation. Just as for the functioning of manufactories, and still more of factories with machine technique, so also for enabling the complex of state economy to develop all its economic advantages and to place under itself a new technical basis, a certain minimum of previously accumulated means in the form of natural elements of production is needed.

<sup>2</sup>I say nothing here about the limitations on the institution of private property in the feudal period. Fundamentally, private property existed then, in spite of these infringements.

Here we suddenly come again upon an extremely important structural difference in principle between capitalism and socialism, to which we shall direct our attention when we analyze the conditions of competition between the socialist and capitalist forms of economy. For manufacture to show its superiority to craft production it was not at all necessary for an enormous number of manufactories to be set up all at once. One, two, five manufactories were enough to show their superiority and defeat craft production in the competitive struggle. Consequently, the amount of previously accumulated capital could be quite small in relation to the size of the national economy as a whole. A few enterprises, constituting a leading shock-group on the economic front and representing a new economic order, could begin an offensive without waiting for the whole transition to take place *en masse* and simultaneously....

In contrast with this, no partial or insignificant amount of socialist accumulation is capable of solving the basic problem of socialist organization of production. In particular, in so far as we are concerned with the economy of the Soviet Union, here we need an accumulation which (1) enables the state economy to achieve the level of present-day capitalist technique, wherever it is not possible to go over gradually to a new technical basis; (2) makes it possible to change the technical basis of state economy, to organize labor scientifically, to plan the administration of the whole complex of state economy—measures impossible without large emergency stocks and planned reserves; (3) ensures an advance by the entire complex and not only particular parts of it, because the inter-dependence of the parts of the whole complex in motion, like the links of a chain, makes quite impossible an uncoordinated advance by the method of capitalist guerrilla warfare, individual initiative and competition. Thus we establish the fact that nationalization of what has been accumulated by capitalism not only does not conclude the period of socialist primary accumulation but, on the contrary, begins it. The period of this accumulation can develop only after the conquest of power by the proletariat and the initial act of accumulation—the socialization of the main branches of the economy. But if this is the case is it possible and correct in general to speak of primitive socialist accumulation,<sup>3</sup> by analogy with primitive capitalist accumulation? After all, the latter began before capitalist production, whereas the former has to take place simultaneously with the beginning of the transition to socialist production and with accumulation in the socialist complex itself. We propose that this term be retained, in a conditional sense, because although primitive socialist accumulation is chronologically interwoven with socialist production and to some extent with socialist accumulation on a basis of production, nevertheless the economic essence of this process in relation to socialist production is the same as that which primitive capitalist accumulation bears to capitalist production.<sup>4</sup> And even if this term were admitted to be unfortunate, it would have to be replaced by another, since the material essence of what it designates does not cease to exist when its name is no longer used. On the contrary, the distinction of primitive socialist accumulation from socialist accumulation itself is of very great significance in principle. We shall see below that this distinction is of great importance for our economic policy just because the mixing-up of these two processes brings in its train gross errors in the sphere of the practical leadership of the economy.

By *socialist* accumulation we mean the addition to the functioning means of production of a surplus product which has been created within the constituted socialist economy

<sup>3</sup>The term 'primitive socialist accumulation' was originated by one of our most outstanding economists, Comrade V. M. Smirnov. We do not specially insist on this term. It could be replaced by 'preliminary socialist accumulation', and in fact we sometimes use this expression as a synonym for the same idea.

<sup>4</sup>It must not be forgotten, either, that although primitive capitalist accumulation on the basis of commercial capitalism precedes capitalist production, yet a whole period of primitive accumulation is embraced also by the initial period of the development of capitalist industry.



and which does not find its way into supplementary distribution among the agents of socialist production and the socialist state, but serves for expanded reproduction. *Primitive socialist* accumulation, on the other hand, means accumulation in the hands of the state of material resources mainly or partly from sources lying outside the complex of state economy. This accumulation must play an extremely important part in a backward peasant country, hastening to a very great extent the arrival of the moment when the technical and scientific reconstruction of the state economy begins and when this economy at last achieves purely economic superiority over capitalism. It is true that in this period accumulation takes place also on the production-base of state economy. In the first place, however, this accumulation also has the character of preliminary accumulation of the means for a really socialist economy and is subordinated to this purpose. Secondly, accumulation of the former kind, that is, at the expense of the non-state milieu, greatly predominates in this period. For this reason we should call this entire state the period of primitive or preliminary socialist accumulation. This period has its special features and its special laws. The basic law of our Soviet economy, which is now passing through this stage, is called precisely the law of primitive or preliminary socialist accumulation. To this law are subordinated all the basic processes of economic life within the range of the state economy. This law, moreover, changes and partly does away with the law of value and all the laws of commodity and capitalist commodity economy, in so far as they appear or can appear in our system of economy. Consequently, *not only can we speak of primitive socialist accumulation, we can understand nothing of the essence of Soviet economy if we do not discover the central role which is played in this economy by the law of primitive socialist accumulation, which determines, in conflict with the law of value, both the distribution of means of production in the economy and the distribution of labor power, and also the amount of the country's surplus product which is alienated for expanded socialist reproduction.*

Let us now examine systematically the main methods of primitive capitalist accumulation and compare them, so far as possible, with the analogous or closely-related methods and processes of primitive socialist accumulation....

Taxation of the non-socialist forms not only must inevitably take place in the period of primitive socialist accumulation, it must inevitably play a very great, a directly decisive role in peasant countries such as the Soviet Union. We must consider this point in some detail.

From the foregoing we have seen that capitalist production was able to begin to function and develop further only by relying on the resources obtained from petty production. The transition of society from the petty-bourgeois system of production to the capitalist could not have been accomplished without preliminary accumulation at the expense of petty production, and would thereafter have proceeded at a snail's pace if additional accumulation at the expense of petty production had not continued alongside capitalist accumulation at the expense of the exploited labor power of the proletariat. The very transition presumes, as a system, an exchange of values between large-scale and petty production under which the latter gives more to the former than it receives. In the period of primitive socialist accumulation the state economy cannot get by without alienating part of the surplus product of the peasantry and the handicraftsmen, without making deductions from capitalist accumulation for the benefit of socialist accumulation. We do not know in how great a condition of ruin other countries in which the dictatorship of the proletariat is going to triumph will emerge from civil war. But a country like the U.S.S.R., with its ruined and in general rather backward economy, must pass through a period of primitive accumulation in which the sources provided by pre-socialist forms of economy are drawn upon very freely. It must not be forgotten that the period of primitive socialist accumulation is the most critical period in the life of the socialist state after the end of the civil war. In this period the socialist system is not yet in a condition to develop all its organic advantages,

but it inevitably abolishes at the same time a number of the economic advantages characteristic of a developed capitalist system. How to pass as quickly as possible through this period, how to reach as quickly as possible the moment when the socialist system will develop all its natural advantages over capitalism, is a question of life and death for the socialist state. At any rate, that is the problem before the U.S.S.R. today, and that will perhaps be the problem for a certain time for a number of European countries in which the proletariat will come to power. Under such conditions, to count only upon accumulation within the socialist field would mean jeopardizing the very existence of the socialist economy, or prolonging endlessly the period of preliminary accumulation, the length which, however, does not depend on the free will of the proletariat. In the concrete part of this work, which will be devoted to the industry and agriculture of the U.S.S.R., we shall cite numerical calculations as to how long we should expect the restoration of our industry even to its pre-war levels to take if we were to rely only on the surplus product of industry itself. In any case the idea that socialist economy can develop on its own, without touching the resources of petty-bourgeois (including peasant economy) is undoubtedly a reactionary petty-bourgeois utopia. The task of the socialist state consists here not in taking from the petty-bourgeois producers less than capitalism took, but in taking more *from the still larger* incomes which will be secured to the petty producer by the rationalization of the whole economy, including petty production, on the basis of industrializing the country and intensifying agriculture.

Another source of socialist accumulation can be taxation of private capitalist profit, that is, systematic deductions from capitalist accumulation. The nature of this kind of resource can be various, but, of course, in the last analysis it is here again a matter of accumulation at the expense of the labor of the workers on the one hand and of the peasants on the other. When the state imposes heavy taxes on private capitalist enterprises it is restoring to the fund of socialist accumulation part of the surplus value which would have been received as surplus product by the state if it had, *all other conditions being equal*, been conducting these enterprises itself....

Let us now pass to foreign trade and the system of socialist protectionism (a term of Comrade Trotsky's). The institution of the monopoly of foreign trade is of quite exceptional importance in the entire system of socialist economy. It is, first, itself one of the organs of socialist accumulation. Secondly, it is one of the most important organs protecting this process of accumulation in all its forms and thereby a pivotal point in the struggle against the law of value of world capitalist economy. Thirdly, this institution is one of the main instruments for regulating the whole economy of the Soviet Union....

The fundamental law of primitive socialist accumulation is the mainspring of the entire Soviet state economy. But it is probable that this law is of universal significance, except perhaps for those countries which will be the last to go over to the socialist form of economy. Proceeding from what we have said above, we can formulate this law, or at least that part of it which relates to the redistribution of the material resources of production, in this way. *The more backward economically, petty-bourgeois, peasant, a particular country is which has gone over to the socialist organization of production, and the smaller the inheritance received by the socialist accumulation fund of the proletariat of this country when the social revolution takes place, by so much the more, in proportion, will socialist accumulation be obliged to rely on alienating part of the surplus product of pre-socialist forms of economy and the smaller will be the relative weight of accumulation on its own production basis, that is, the less will it be nourished by the surplus product of the workers in socialist industry. Conversely, the more developed economically and industrially a country is, in which the social revolution triumphs, and the greater the material inheritance, in the form of highly developed industry and capitalistically organized agriculture, which the proletariat of this country receives from the bourgeoisie on nationalization, by*

*so much the smaller will be the relative weight of pre-capitalist forms in the particular country; and the greater the need for the proletariat of this country to reduce non-equivalent exchange of its products for the products of the former colonies, by so much the more will the center of gravity of socialist accumulation shift to the production basis of the socialist forms, that is, the more will it rely on the surplus product of its own industry and its own agriculture.*<sup>5</sup>

The period of preliminary socialist accumulation is not only a period of the collecting of material resources by the new economy for a final victory over the capitalist form, it is at the same time a period of direct struggle of the state economy against private economy, a struggle which also proceeds along the line of redistribution of labor power. One of the most interesting questions of the theory of the socialist economy is the question how, in concrete terms, the elimination by the historically superior socialist economic system of all the pre-socialist forms will take place. The problem breaks down into these parts: first, how the methods of struggle of the socialist form against private economy in the period of preliminary socialist accumulation will differ from the methods of struggle in the period of truly socialist industry and, secondly, what will be the difference in the mutual relations of the socialist form with the capitalist form, on the one hand, and with petty commodity production on the other....

To finish with the question under discussion, we must say the following. In the period of primitive socialist accumulation the state economy, even though it has not reconstructed its technique, is already in a position to make use of those advantages of a unified, organized complex which are beyond the reach of capitalism, which expends much of its resources to no purpose as a result of its anarchical structure. Attempts to utilize these advantages under the system of War Communism were unsuccessful, and their fruits were lost and fell down into that hole of general economic deficit which was characteristic of that economic system. Now these advantages would be very much more noticeable if we were at last to carry out the most urgent organizational task, which is also an important political one, of directing the entire state economy as a single entity....<sup>6</sup>

### *The Struggle between the Two Laws*

We proceed now to the last problem, which is the most interesting from the theoretical standpoint; the question of the struggle between the two laws—the law of value and the law of socialist accumulation—within the economy of the U.S.S.R....

Summing up this preliminary balance of the operation of the law of value and the law of socialist accumulation in our economy, we arrive at the conclusion that no scientific analysis of our economy is possible if one does not recognize the existence of these two laws and if one does not study the outcome of their interaction.

Now we are in a position to give a fuller formulation of the law of primitive socialist accumulation than that already given, in so far as this law not only dictates to us with objective inevitability a certain volume of accumulation of material resources for expanded reproduction from state and private economy, but also opposes the law of value along the whole battlefield, presenting itself as the regulator of another type of economy, antagonistic to commodity production. This definition, particular aspects of which will be more precisely shaded in later, when we analyze the law of value in our economy, can as a whole be reduced to the following.

*By the law of primitive socialist accumulation we mean the entire sum of conscious and semi-spontaneous tendencies in the state economy which are directed towards the expansion and consolidation of the collective organization of labor in Soviet economy and which are dictated to the Soviet state on the basis of necessity: (1) the determination of proportions in the distribution of productive forces, formed on the basis of struggle against the*

<sup>5</sup>This law must of course, undergo certain modifications when there is a transfer of means of production from an advanced socialist country to a backward one.

<sup>6</sup>Since these lines were written this process has advanced considerably. (Note to the Second Edition.)

*law of value inside and outside the country and having as their objective task the achievement of the optimum expanded socialist reproduction in the given conditions and of the maximum defensive capacity of the whole system in conflict with capitalist commodity production; (2) the determination of the proportions of accumulation of material resources for expanded reproduction, especially at the expense of private economy, in so far as the determined amounts of this accumulation are dictated compulsorily to the Soviet state under threat of economic disproportion, growth of private capital, weakening of the bond between the state economy and peasant production, derangement in years to come of the necessary proportions of expanded socialist reproduction and weakening of the whole system in its conflict with capitalist commodity production inside and outside the country.*

The following are inevitably subordinated to the law of primitive socialist production: the amount of surplus product alienated from private economy; the level of wages in the state economy; price policy; the regulation of internal and external trade; the tariff system; credit policy; the structure of the budget; the structure of import plans; and so on....

E. Preobrazhensky, *The New Economics*. Translated by Brian Pearce. Clarendon Press, 1965 (Copyright Oxford University Press), 77-78, 79-80, 81-84, 88-89, 123-24, 132-33, 145-46.



# BUKHARIN ON THE ECONOMIC CONTROVERSY AND THE DEFENSE OF NEP

12 December 1924

*Preobrazhensky's essay on the fundamental problems of economic development (see above, November 1924), forced the Party to try to work out a more coherent theory for its current economic policies. The main responsibility for this fell to Bukharin, probably the leading theoretician among the party leaders. He now undertook to defend and explain the rationale for NEP. Although this took the form of an attack on Preobrazhensky, it began the process of working out the most complete justification of NEP and the leadership's economic policies (especially the policy of accommodation with the peasants). Both Preobrazhensky and Bukharin (and party leaders generally) accepted certain basic premises: that industrial development was essential, and that it would have to rely primarily on internal resources (i.e., on transfer of resources from the rural to the industrial and from the "private" to the socialist sectors). They disagreed fundamentally on methods and timing. Bukharin, in arguing for the mixed economy of NEP, argued also for the importance of the consumer market, for the importance of maintaining the peasant-worker alliance (the smychka), and for avoiding policies which might lead to a new civil war. These ideas were developed in a number of essays published in 1924-26; the following is one of the first and most important. This was originally published in Pravda, December 12, 1924, and then in Kritika ekonomicheskoi platformy oppositsii (Leningrad, 1926), from which this translation is taken.*

N. I. Bukharin

*A New Revelation Concerning the Soviet Economy  
or How to Destroy the Worker-Peasant Bloc*

(On the Question of the Economic Basis of Trotskyism)

It frequently happens that a historical turning point stirs up ideological debates, which initially break out by "accident," develop in "accidental" directions, and at first glance

appear to be completely incomprehensible. Only with the passage of time do definite ideological patterns crystallize. Without any particular difficulty, subsequent analysis then reveals the social tendencies of well-defined classes or groups that have a definite social significance and play a definite social role.

We have now come to another turning point in the development of our revolution, as indicated by the end of the blockade, diplomatic recognition from several quarters, and a simultaneous interruption in the development of the international revolution. Other indicators are the rapid economic upsurge that is now beginning, together with a new relationship between the working class and the peasantry. In a word, we face a *new* situation. Within the party it is natural for this new situation to cause a reaction, and just as natural that we should require time in order to develop our own, so to speak, "consciousness."

Comrade Trotsky issued his *Lessons of October*, and the debate appeared to be of a purely literary nature. But this literary debate grew into an entire party-political campaign. In this context a debate between "*personalities*" would be odd. Would it be possible for "personalities" to bring such passion to the discussion? No, there were, and are, *objective moments* that have prompted the debate, underlie it, and initially surfaced in the form of a "literary" polemic.

That is how the debate began. And now it has already become clear that *profoundly important questions of principle* have been raised, questions that are decisive for our party as a whole. These questions have been "hidden" within the objective conditions of the country; they "correspond" to those conditions and grow out of them. This is why the entire party must go to the trouble of investigating such seemingly "impractical" problems as that of the "permanent revolution." A new situation creates the need for a well-thought-out orientation. And since the new situation takes shape in accordance with fundamental lines of development (the outside world, the economy, classes within the country), it is small wonder that the party is asking certain general questions: this is but an expression of our general practice of considering the path before us and thinking it through to the end.

*Separate* problems and *individual* disagreements are now being combined into basic "theoretical" groupings, into entire systems of thought and more or less consistent "theories." Issues that were strewn about like straws in the previous discussion—the monetary reform and the question of generations within the party, the question of prices and "*apparatchiks*," of the "scissors" and "internal party democracy," the question of a "plan" and of "commodity intervention"—all these issues are *now* congealing along certain definite lines, and are shown to be based upon such general problems as the theory of permanent revolution, appraisal of the moving forces of our revolution, general assessment of its prospects, etc. And the axis about which all of the questions revolve, important they might be in their own right, is the *problem of the worker-peasant bloc*.

The doctrine of the worker-peasant bloc is the most essential and original feature of Leninism. Every attempt to avoid the question of whether Lenin's teaching and the line of the Bolshevik party are true or false must end in vain. Here one must choose. And that is why the party reacted so violently to Comrade Trotsky's work. Here the party saw—and with good reason—an attempt to revise the *foundations* of Leninist teachings.

Such attempts have also been made in the past. But those attempts went unnoticed: there was a war to wage, and all tasks were immediate and urgent. Now, *precisely now*, any such attempt becomes more complex. It is therefore understandable that when a substantial dose of anti-Leninism is dispensed under the guise of extracting "the lessons of October," the party sharply protests.

*For the moment* we have a certain lull in the revolutionary movement. *According to Lenin*, this is nothing fatal: by a slow route we are moving forward, little by little, pulling the heavy peasant carriage along behind. The fact is that Lenin did not speak in terms of the notion maintaining that a proletarian revolution must succeed when there is substantial

industry—and perish in a petit bourgeois country. On more than one occasion he underlined the novelty of our revolution and the special combination of historical conditions that brought us victory (see, for example, his notes on the book by N. Sukhanov). And what of Comrade Trotsky? Comrade Trotsky saw nothing but *disaster* unless the world revolution arrived speedily. Why?

Because there was a difference, a basic difference, in the estimate of the moving forces.

As early as 1922, Comrade Trotsky *insisted on the correctness* of his theory of “permanent revolution” and wrote that after seizing power, the proletariat “will have a hostile encounter not only with every grouping of the bourgeoisie, who supported it in the first steps of its revolutionary struggle, *but also with the broad masses of the peasantry, with whose assistance it came to power.* The contradictions in the position of a workers’ government in a backward country in which the peasantry constitutes the overwhelming majority of the population can be resolved *only ... in the arena of a world proletarian revolution*” (foreword to the book 1905).

Lenin taught that a conflict between the working class and the peasantry is *by no means inevitable*. Trotsky teaches that this conflict is *obligatory*. Lenin taught that our salvation lies in our ability to *get along* with the peasant, that we are *perfectly able* to do so and thus to hang on and grow stronger, however long victories are postponed in the West. Trotsky offers something else: the ruin of the proletariat is *inevitable* without a speedy victory throughout the world; the proletariat *will perish* under the blows of the “broad masses of the peasantry,” who at one time helped it to triumph. For Lenin, the peasantry, during the whole of the transitional period, must be the inevitable *ally* of the working class, despite peasant grumblings; for the “permanentists,” it must become the enemy. For Lenin this issue led to the unique theory of “agrarian-cooperative” socialism; those who support the other position have a completely *different* view of our path of future development.

Is it not clear that such a fundamental difference must inevitably come to the surface in a number of the most diverse questions? Of course it is. And now an attempt is already being made to unite all of these “peculiarities,” these deviations from the Leninist line, into one. Here we intend to analyze the *economic* aspect of the anti-Leninist conception, which is given in Comrade Preobrazhensky’s work “The Fundamental Law of Socialist Accumulation” [Osnovnoi Zakon Sotsialisticheskogo Nakopleniya] (*Vestnik Kommunisticheskoi Akademii*, 1924, no. 8). Interesting in its design and its framing of the question, this work nevertheless begins with premises closely related to those of Trotsky (a circumstance that demonstrates that more than personalities are at issue). It follows that it also begins with theoretically *incorrect* premises. Moreover, it draws a number of practical-political conclusions that are extremely dangerous for our party, for the working class, and for the entire country. In our own work we should like to deal with a critique of this theoretical work, treating it as an *example* of an untrue, completely unproletarian, trade-unionist and shop-centered ideology.

### 1. COMMUNISM OR THE “REIGN OF THE PROLETARIAT”?

The fundamental law of socialist accumulation, as discovered by Comrade Preobrazhensky, proclaims:

The greater the economic backwardness and the petit bourgeois, peasant character of any particular country that adopts a socialist organization of production, and the smaller the inheritance the proletariat of this country receives in its socialist accumulation fund at the moment of social (socialist?—N.B.) revolution, the more socialist accumulation will be compelled to rely on the *exploitation* of presocialist forms of economy, and the smaller will be the relative significance of accumulation on its own productive basis, that is, the less will accumulation be nourished by the surplus product of workers in socialist industry. Conversely, the more economically and industrially developed is any country in which the social (socialist?—N.B.) revolution triumphs and the greater the material inheritance, in the form of highly developed industry and capitalistically organized agriculture, that the proletariat of

this country receives from the bourgeoisie upon nationalization, the less significant will the capitalist forms of production become and the greater will be the need for the proletariat of this country to reduce the *nonequivalence of exchange between its own products and those of the colonies*, that is, to reduce the *exploitation of the latter*. The more, too, will the center of gravity of socialist accumulation shift to socialist forms of production, i.e., the more will it rely on the surplus product of its own industry and *its own agriculture*. (All emphases added—N.B.)

The above is a word-for-word formulation of the “fundamental law” laid down by Comrade Preobrazhensky. Without turning to the essence of the “law,” for now we shall consider the following *two* of Comrade Preobrazhensky’s positions. At first sight these positions appear to be a matter of terminological inaccuracy or a distinctive form of literary coquetry.

*The first position* is that socialist accumulation takes place more or less through the *exploitation* of small producers.

*The second position* holds that these small producers (or their holdings, taken collectively) are nothing but a *colony* of proletarian industry.<sup>7</sup> It is primarily with these assertions of Comrade Preobrazhensky’s that we must begin. In this regard we would have every right to cry for “help,” so dramatically do these “philological tags” contradict all the traditions of our Marxist-Leninist theory. But we believe it is much better to *analyze them dispassionately* and to see what these tags hide, and why they are essentially but an expression of a whole system of *unique views concerning the significance and the fate of the worker-peasant bloc*.

At one point in his work Comrade Preobrazhensky writes: “Only complete theoretical carelessness would permit one to see in socialist protectionism a complete analogy with capitalist protectionism.

That observation is quite correct. But Comrade Preobrazhensky himself displays “complete theoretical carelessness” when he uncritically and without any reservations whatever employs scandalously incorrect designations and *plays* with analogies. Moreover, we shall show below that much more than simple “play” is involved.

First of all, consider the question of the *exploitation* of small producers by the proletariat. Comrade Preobrazhensky describes the matter by saying that the working class sits on the small producers. The relationship between the basic classes of an essentially two-class, worker-peasant society is consequently one of *exploitation*. The exploiting class is the proletariat (and that, economically, is quite fine); the exploited class is made up of the small producers. The more backward the country undergoing a socialist transformation is, the more clearly visible is the proletariat’s exploitative character, and the more exploited, in consequence, is the small producer.

This is a boldly drawn picture, is it not? And it is the *inevitable* result of taking Comrade Preobrazhensky’s formulations seriously (a scientific study, one might suppose, is written seriously).

Does socialist industry acquire surplus value for the accumulation fund from small producers? Yes, it does. That fact is not subject to doubt. Is there thus a transfer of values, from the hands of one class into those of another class, the ruling class? Yes, there is. That fact, too, is not open to question. But can this particular relationship, by using a very coarse analogy with capitalist society (“theoretical carelessness”) be called one of *exploitation*?

<sup>7</sup> From Comrade Preobrazhensky’s exposition it is not entirely clear whether he includes only the peasants of *former colonies* or all petit bourgeois undertakings. But essentially this changes very little. In our case, for instance, aside from the people of Great Russia [the Muscovy region-RW] an enormous number of peasants would fall into this category. There is no doubt that Comrade Preobrazhensky sees the workers’ state having *colonies*.

Can one, on this basis, call the proletariat an *exploiting class* (a conclusion that inevitably follows from the foregoing position)?

No! A thousand times no! And not because this description "sounds bad," or because we are being cowardly in face of the facts that my courageous friend boldly describes, using the correct terminology. The point is that this "terminology" does not correspond to—indeed, it contradicts—both objective reality and our historical tasks.

Let us take a genuine and indisputable relationship of exploitation, for example, *capitalist* exploitation. Here we have a definite productive relationship that expresses a definite mode of production. The capitalist class acquires surplus value. Production is the production of surplus value. The process as a whole continually *reproduces*—and on an *expanded basis* at that—*this exploitative relationship*. In other words, here the function of accumulation is constant reproduction of the relationship of exploitation. *The transfer of values from the hands of one class to the hands of another class continually expands class contradictions and continually reproduces the relationship between the capitalist masters and their hired slaves*. In any other exploitative society we see exactly the same thing. We repeat, in any other exploitative society.

But what does the transfer of values from small producers into the hands of proletarian industry signify? It signifies the directly *opposite* tendency, to be precise, a tendency toward *overcoming* the antithesis between town and country, between the proletariat and the peasantry, between socialist and petit bourgeois economic spheres. For we are heading not toward a *reinforcement* of relations among classes, but toward their *elimination*. And the faster accumulation takes place within the socialist economic sphere and its periphery, which is *becoming* socialist, the faster does the elimination of the antithesis proceed as well.

Can this process be described as one involving the *exploitation* of small producers? No, it must not be described that way. To do so would involve setting aside the whole *uniqueness* of the process, misunderstanding its objective significance, playing with analogies, and, to use the words of our author, displaying "theoretical carelessness." And to set aside the *uniqueness* of the process would, in turn, signify failure to understand its *historical essence*. For theory this would be a very great, one might even say "deadly," sin, a "sin" that must inevitably be reflected in the practical, applied constructions of the "sinner."

Now let us turn to the question of "*colonies*." Comrade Preobrazhensky evidently understands the concept of colonies to mean an aggregation of "third parties" (a Narodnik-Luxemburgist designation for noncapitalist producers within the capitalist system). One can, it is true, debate the question of whether this designation is correct as it is applied to the capitalist system or whether it is unsuitable. But that is a special question, which we have no intention of raising, let alone analyzing, here. As for whether Comrade Preobrazhensky understands a colony to include the aggregate of petit bourgeois undertakings in a real colony, or *all* petit bourgeois undertakings, that is an issue of secondary importance. The essential point is that Comrade Preobrazhensky applies this term, without any embarrassment whatever, to the epoch of *proletarian dictatorship*. In other words, from an economic viewpoint we have in this epoch, according to Comrade Preobrazhensky, a proletarian "metropolis" in socialist industry and petit bourgeois "colonies" in peasant farms (even if not in every case). The relationship of the working class to the peasantry is of the same type as that between the plantation owner and the colonial object of exploitation. As we see, this "point of view" is *totally "enmeshed"* in Comrade Preobrazhensky's reasoning concerning "exploitation." In other words, these are not casual slips of the tongue, not a *lapsus linguae* or an "unfortunate expression." Comrade Preobrazhensky has his own consistency, his own logic. But this is the "logic" and "consistency" of a systematically developed *error*.

What is the real essence of the concept of colonies? Its essence is that a colony is the object of exploitation, that its development is systematically *held back* in the interest of the



"metropolis," that it is, under any and all circumstances, an object of political and economic enslavement. A colony never emerges as an ally of the "metropolis"; no "metropolis" ever undertakes to raise the colony to its own level, etc.

But once this fact has been established—and it is a fact—then it becomes quite ludicrous to define the peasant economy and the petit bourgeois economic periphery in general as a colony of proletarian industry. This conclusion is so obvious that one hardly needs to develop it further.

In only *one* instance would the formulations of Comrade Preobrazhensky turn out to be correct; and that would be if we were not dealing with movement toward a classless, communist society, but rather with eternal strengthening of the proletarian dictatorship, preservation of the proletariat's domination and thus its *degeneration* into a real exploiting class. *Then*, applied to that sort of system, the concept of exploitation would be correct, without any qualifications. By the same token, it would also be correct to designate the petit bourgeois peasant economy, if one might put it this way, a "proletarian" colony.

The dream is horrible, but God is gracious. Fortunately, the peculiar shop-centered and trade-unionist viewpoint that permeates Comrade Preobrazhensky's article has no basis in real practice. It is nothing more than an individual-theoretical dislocation, which enjoys no credit—for the moment, at least—within our ranks.

## 2. THE "DEVOURING" OF THE PETIT BOURGEOIS ECONOMY OR ITS ALTERATION?

Concerning the links between socialist industry and the private (especially the petit bourgeois) economy, Comrade Preobrazhensky writes, among other things, that it would be absurd to think that "the socialist system and the system of private commodity production, when included in a single national economic system, could coexist with one another on the basis of complete economic equilibrium between them. Such an equilibrium cannot exist for long, because *one system must swallow up the other*. Either degradation or a forward development is possible (backward 'development' is not development—N.B.), but it is not possible to stand still."

If one compares this excerpt with the end of the formula of the "fundamental law," where Comrade Preobrazhensky speaks of (the proletariat's) "own agriculture," one can get a clear impression of how the author of the "fundamental law" perceives the inevitable, victory of a socialist regime in the economy. State industry destroys and squeezes out ("swallows up") the small economy of the villages and replaces it (just how is not yet clear) with the proletariat's "own agriculture." The small economy is destroyed ("swallowed up") by way of systematic exploitation (nonequivalent exchange, taxes, and various means of noneconomic pressure), and the proletariat behaves in a manner analogous to that of the knights of primitive accumulation.

If the prospect were as Preobrazhensky portrays it (or, more accurately, if such a prospect *were* to develop), then our anxiety about the peasant economy would certainly be curious. But it is too soon to pursue this theme just yet. Let us turn to the issue directly. Is it true that we must necessarily experience the dissolution ("swallowing up") of small-scale agricultural production? Is it true or not?

We believe that it is *fundamentally* untrue. We think this is a completely non-Leninist way of formulating the question (and I say this not at all as a polemic in the tedious or petty sense of the word). We believe that to pose the question in this way absolutely does not correspond to the paths of development in the direction of socialism that we have projected.

What is it that we are now promoting? What are we orienting ourselves upon, first of all? We are promoting state trade and *cooperation*. And what plan did Lenin advance, what brilliant line of policy did he give for converting small producers into members of a future socialist community? He spoke of the cooperative unification of peasants not under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, but under that of the proletarian state, with *its* banks, *its* credit, *its* industry and transport, etc. Is Comrade Preobrazhensky in agreement with this plan, or is he not?

If he is *not in agreement*, he must present a number of arguments to show that this plan is "utopian" (or something else, of which we have yet to hear). If he is *in agreement*, then all of his positions serve no purpose.

For it is perfectly clear that in *this* case one speaks not at all of extermination or of *swallowing up* (by way of "exploitation" in the manner of a period of primitive accumulation), but of the *gradual alteration* of peasant farms on the basis of their economic growth. And this is a song from a different, an entirely different, opera—by no means the one that contains the "terribly proletarian" (and at the same time shop-centered) "aria" of Comrade Preobrazhensky.

Here, too, one finds in Comrade Preobrazhensky's work a game of analogies with capitalist development. Here, too, Comrade Preobrazhensky has no understanding of the fundamental *uniqueness* of the process for those very agrarian-peasant countries he is discussing above all else. We shall achieve socialist production on the land not by ruining peasant farms and squeezing them out with Soviet farms, but by a completely different path, namely, by drawing the peasantry into cooperation that is linked to us and economically dependent upon the state and its institutions. We shall arrive at socialism in this case through the *process of circulation*, not directly through the process of production. We shall arrive through *cooperation*.<sup>8</sup>

As we have pointed out, Comrade Preobrazhensky does not even pose this question, although the Leninist articles were perfectly convincing.

Comrade Preobrazhensky does not say either "yes" or "no."

"Do not buy black or white,

Do not say 'yes' or 'no.'"

*In essence he says, "no".*

There is one short but characteristic passage in which this "no" can be heard clearly, even if still timidly. Here is what Comrade Preobrazhensky writes in this connection:

As regards the matter of direct relations between the state economy and the petit bourgeois mode of production, such relations are completely possible and must introduce something quite new into the economic history of human society, as does the whole new socialist economy in general. Subordinating neocapitalism to itself, the state economy also subordinates those things that are subordinated to neocapitalism, that is, the elements of simple commodity production on which this second edition of capitalism arises. But there inevitably arises *in addition* an entire system of direct mutual relations between small-scale production and the state economy. The essence of these relations must be defined as follows. Small-scale production may be divided into three parts. One part *retains* the character of petty production; another adopts *capitalist forms of cooperation*; and the third—avoiding the latter process—unites on the basis of *some (!) new cooperation*, which represents a special type of transition from petty production to socialism neither by way of capitalism *nor through the simple absorption of small-scale production by the state economy*.

This new form of cooperation under the dictatorship of the proletariat, of which communes and artels appear to be varieties, is still only about to develop. Thus, we cannot present a theoretical analysis of what does not yet exist, but is only about to emerge.

And that is all there is. *C'est tout*.

We are struck here, above all, by the illustrious Comrade Preobrazhensky's modesty—which is saintly enough to get him into heaven. He does not debate with Lenin, who put forward, as we know, a vast and definite plan, the embodiment of *theoretical foresight*: he "simply" announces that it is impossible to present a theoretical analysis "of what does not yet exist, but is only about to emerge." In our opinion this is a subterfuge. For in our country we have *just now* arrived at socialist accumulation (is that not so?), and in other countries the process is only "about to emerge." Nevertheless, Comrade Preobrazhensky has

<sup>8</sup> Here we mention only the *fundamental* process; obviously, agricultural communes, artels, and other forms of production associations will also play a part.

already hastened to offer a "*fundamental law*" (remember, *fundamental!*) of this socialist accumulation. And this fundamental law speaks of the movement of accumulation, of accumulation in different countries, and so forth. It is therefore to absolutely no avail that Comrade Preobrazhensky is now being modest. The matter is simply not being worked out as it should be!

What is the essence of the matter?

In essence Comrade Preobrazhensky sees the evolution of the peasant economy in three directions:

1. Small farms "remain" small farms.
2. Small farms become capitalist through capitalist cooperation.
3. Small farms cooperate in a still unknown socialist pattern, of which the embryo is the agricultural artel and commune.

We observe with amazement, first of all, that there is *no* room here for *Leninist* cooperation, which leads the peasantry to socialism. Here there is no cooperation in exchange, through which, and with the help of our commanding heights, we are pulling the mass of the peasantry into the general, socialist economic system. *Instead* Comrade Preobrazhensky mentions "agricultural communes," which have to do with production and are secondary in importance. The *elephant* has escaped Comrade Preobrazhensky's notice.

Next, just who is the state economy going to "swallow up"?

Apparently not the communes.

What about the peasants who cooperate in a *capitalist* manner?

But they are only a small minority.

It turns out that the main method of genuine economic "socialization" is the method of "swallowing up" ("the simple absorption of small-scale production by the state economy," as Comrade Preobrazhensky expresses himself in this connection). And this is the principal method to be used in relation to the mass of small producers.

Is there any need to say that this is the most genuine utopia? Again Comrade Preobrazhensky does not see the uniqueness of those roads that open up with the proletarian dictatorship. Comrade Preobrazhensky thinks the laws of evolution in agriculture remain the same under the proletarian dictatorship as under capitalism. In reality, the "noncapitalist evolution" that several writers have preached under *capitalism* ("cooperative-agrarian socialism") becomes *reality* under the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. If it is true that under the conditions of bourgeois power—with bourgeois banks, capitalist credit, capitalist organizing officials, and the hegemony of capitalist ideology in the country—if it is true that under these conditions the cooperative organizations of the peasant *masses* (even of the *masses*) inevitably "grew into" capitalism, it is equally true that with *proletarian* commanding heights, with proletarian power, banks, credit, industry, cadres, ideology, etc., matters will be totally different. These cooperative organizations will not "grow into" capitalism (and in fact, are already "growing into" something else).

Comrade Preobrazhensky did not understand *this fact*. Instead he has his own unique logic here as well: the idea of "swallowing up" corresponds fully to "exploitation," "colonies," etc. Once again, Comrade Preobrazhensky, this aria does not, under any circumstances, come from the Leninist opera!

### 3. CLASS ENSLAVEMENT OR A CLASS ALLIANCE AND CLASS LEADERSHIP?

One must understand when looking at the relation of forces within a country such as the USSR that the dictatorship of the proletariat represents *one* relation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and a *different* relation between the proletariat and the peasantry. The proletariat *rules* over the bourgeoisie. But the proletariat *leads* the peasantry, using its concentrated power for this purpose. The working class "*leans upon*" the peasantry, and for this reason its dictatorship (in relation to the peasantry) cannot be viewed as

being of *the same type* as the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat. But that, in fact, is precisely how Comrade Preobrazhensky looks at things.

Our state, in the precise sense, is not a "worker-peasant" but a workers' state. But the workers' state leans upon the peasantry, a unique relationship that must be "theoretically grasped."

It is just this uniqueness that Comrade Preobrazhensky does not grasp.

His whole analysis is built on an analogy with the period of primitive accumulation of capital. In that case there was plundering of the peasants—here "exploitation." There, on the basis of this plunder, the preconditions for the flourishing of a new order were consolidated; and here the law of socialist accumulation requires analogous preconditions. There a catastrophically quick "swallowing up" of old forms occurred—here the same, etc.

In a word, everything is in order, as in the most decent families.

But the fact is that matters are neither so simple nor so "pretty" as Comrade Preobrazhensky describes them.

Until now we have dealt with this question from the point of view of an analysis of various *economic forms*. Now we shall deal with it more pointedly, in terms of *class relations*.

Comrade Preobrazhensky's starting point is the analogy he proposes between the relation of the knights of primitive accumulation to the small-scale producer and the relation of the proletariat to the same group.

But is this not really a *monstrous* analogy? Once again we say this not because we fear the real facts or possibly their "bad" taste, but simply from a desire to achieve some sort of proximity to objective reality.

We shout in every direction about the worker-peasant alliance, the bloc, etc. Until now *no one* has spoken against this bloc. It was considered to be an *axiom* in our ranks. Is that not true?

But when and where during the epoch of the primitive accumulation of capital was there talk of a *bloc* between the knights of accumulation and their victims? Let anyone show us anything of the kind.

No one can do so, because it is impossible, because the very supposition of such a bloc is *absurd*.

But with us the worker-peasant bloc has been, is, and we hope will continue to be, a *reality*.

How is it possible to make such analogies? How is it possible to build whole theories on such a basis or, what is more (as we shall see below), to define a line of economic policy on the part of the proletarian state?

This "analogy" of Comrade Preobrazhensky's is one again "bogged down" in the assertions we have already considered. (It is not difficult to see that if the party were penetrated by such a "Preobrazhensky-ist" ideology, it would thereby destroy the basis of its own strength—the worker-peasant bloc.)

If we are really to look in bourgeois society for relations analogous to those between the workers and the peasants, then we much search in a direction entirely different from Comrade Preobrazhensky. Let us try to find such analogies ourselves.

The working class currently has possession of political power and agriculture.<sup>9</sup> The peasant is a seller of agricultural products and a buyer of industrial products; the reverse is generally true of the worker. The *direct* interests come into collision along precisely these lines. Moreover, the peasant is also a vestige of antiquity, albeit a "vestige" of enormous weight.

This condition is not comparable with that between the knights of accumulation and the peasants. Instead, it resemble the relation between the industrial bourgeoisie and the landlords

<sup>9</sup> Although the fact that the land is legally the property of the workers' state plays an enormous role.

at a certain period in the development of their relations, although even here, of course, the analogy is *extremely* conditional and by no means comprehensive.

The bourgeoisie has the power and the factories; the landlords have the land. The contradictory interests develop along the line of princes—*hence* their struggle, which occasionally and in certain conditions becomes quite acute. But at the same time (we are speaking of the period when the *bourgeoisie* has power) there is a *bloc*, an alliance of the capitalist and the landlord against the working class. The bourgeoisie *leads* this bloc; the bourgeoisie *leans upon* the landlords and is supported by them.

What has been the evolution of these classes in recent times? Through the process of circulation, through the *banks*, through the form of joint-stock companies, etc., both classes (i.e., both the industrial capitalists and the landlords) were transformed, to a large extent, into a sort of unity, into recipients of *dividends*. The *dividend* became, so to speak, a synthesis of different forms of income that were not previously calibrated in the same way—such, at any rate, was (and remains) the basic tendency of development within the sphere of relations under review.

Something formally similar will also occur—if a broad enough historical context is considered—in the worker-peasant bloc. Insofar as the peasant economy, though the process of circulation, is increasingly drawn into the socialist orbit, class barriers will be erased, will disappear in a classless society.

This is, of course, music of the future. At present various problems appear from day to day. But we must take a long view in order to know how to “shape” our course. And the view with which Comrade Preobrazhensky begins is *fundamentally* incorrect.

#### 4. THE WORKER-PEASANT BLOC AND THE ECONOMIC “POLICY” OF COMRADE PREOBRAZHENSKY

From the foregoing theoretical considerations Comrade Preobrazhensky draws the corresponding practical and political conclusions. Having “established” that the “swallowing up” of the unfortunate “third parties” or the inhabitant of the “internal and external colonies” is inevitable, Comrade Preobrazhensky writes:

No. 1

And thus we come to the third case, which is not only possible but inevitable under our conditions, that is, a pricing policy consciously calculated for exploitation of the private economy in all of its forms.

We beg the reader’s forgiveness for the following excerpts, which run into kilometeric lengths, but we are obliged to use them in order conscientiously to follow the course of Comrade Preobrazhensky’s thought. In order to facilitate the ensuing critique, we shall designate the separate positions of our author with special numbers, beginning with the quotation provided above.

No. 2

In any case, the idea that the socialist economy can develop on its own, without touching the resources of the petit bourgeois (including the peasant) economy, is without doubt a reactionary petit bourgeois utopia. Here the task of the socialist state is not to take less from the petit bourgeois producers than capitalism took, but to take more from an *even larger* income, which will be guaranteed to the small-scale producer through rationalization of the entire economy, including small-scale production.

No. 3

What is taken from private trade, other conditions being equal, will be included in the state accumulation fund. I say “other conditions being equal” because here it is possible to adopt a trade policy that is in the interest not of socialist accumulation, but of petit bourgeois producers, since it aims at reducing deductions from their incomes. Whether such a policy is expedient is another question(!). Economically there is no doubt that it involves a reduction of the fund of socialist accumulation and a gift to private production—a gift that is all the more costly to the state

*economy the poorer that economy is in terms of capital and the less profitable it is for it to employ in trade, or what amounts to philanthropy (!), a portion of the capital that is already inadequate to meet the needs of production.* (Author's emphases—N.B.)

No. 4

The power of the proletarian state, which extends over the surplus product of the private economy (naturally, within the *limits of what is economically possible and technically attainable*), is not only itself an instrument of primitive accumulation but also a constant reserve for this accumulation—one might say, a potential fund at the disposal of the state economy.

To summarize:

1. A policy of high prices must be implemented for the exploitation of the peasant economy (which is important from the viewpoint of socialist accumulation).
2. In this respect it is necessary (No. 4) to take all that is economically possible and technically attainable.
3. Under the heading of an "economically possible" policy (a most obscure expression) one must understand, at the least, one that under no conditions has the goal of taking less than capitalism took.
4. Any other policy would be petit bourgeois, a gift to the peasant, a loss both to industry and to the cause of socialism.

This is Comrade Preobrazhensky's concept of "pricing policy." "Take more!"—that is his entire wisdom, based upon the "fundamental law."

Let us scrutinize the wisdom of Comrade Preobrazhensky's revised "party" policy with a critical magnifying glass.

Consider quotation No. 2, concerning the petit bourgeois policy of our party (everyone sees that Comrade Preobrazhensky is aiming the critical arrows of his analysis precisely at the real policy of our party). In this area Comrade Preobrazhensky's thought consists of two positions: *first*, the objective must not be to take less than capitalism took; and *second*, we shall take *more*, for the income of the peasant will be *larger* because his farm will be more rational and thus more profitable.

In Comrade Preobrazhensky's second position there is much common sense, in the positive meaning of the term. But this second position contradicts everything else and represents an involuntary tribute to Leninist teaching, a tribute that has been lost in a heap of anti-Leninist constructions by the same author.

If Comrade Preobrazhensky really thinks that we will take more because the *incomes* of peasant farms will be greater ("rationalization," etc.), then how can this position be reconciled with the theory of "swallowing up"? Here we have a glaring contradiction—by no means a dialectical contradiction, but one that is perfectly flat!

Either one option or the other must be chosen. One option is to follow the line of a "colonial" policy aimed at exploitation and extracting all that is "technically attainable." In that case we shall see the *decay* of the peasant farm, the *collapse* of its income, its *destruction*, disappearance, and "swallowing up." But what then happens to the "larger income," the "rationalization," and other things "His Honor," Comrade Preobrazhensky, just promised to the petit bourgeois producers?

Alternatively the proletarian state might *really* receive more on the basis of *growing rationalization and growing incomes* within the peasant economy. This is a genuinely *correct* policy. But in that event, all—or almost all—of Comrade Preobrazhensky's position would have to be rejected. There will be no "swallowing up" of petit bourgeois farms (it goes without saying that here we are speaking of the main mass of middle-sized peasant farms, and that this position does not exclude the partial disappearance of small farms in connection with the removal of surplus population to the cities and the process of proletarianization, which will continue to occur even with the system of proletarian dictatorship).

What will take place is the *remaking* of farms, their transformation on a cooperative basis. The growing incomes, the growing rationalization, etc., will simultaneously mean *attracting these farms through cooperation* into the general system of our economy, in which socialism is being built. We must aim not at *elimination* of the peasant economy, but at *attracting* it into the system of the state economy.

But if we "take more" *in accordance with the growth of incomes*, then we obviously are not indifferent to the question of "accumulation" *within the peasant economy* (we use the term in quotation marks because in its exact sense this term refers to a *capitalist* economy). And if we are interested in this accumulation, then we must not limit ourselves to the slogan "Take more if possible." We must not set the limit of "extortion" at what is "technically attainable." We must not speak of the cost imposed on socialism by the "gift" to the petite bourgeoisie, of philanthropy, and so on. Finally, we must not even formulate the problem in the same coarsely simplified manner that Comrade Preobrazhensky does.

In his third "position" Comrade Preobrazhensky reduces the entire problem to arithmetic, to addition, subtraction, and division. *Divide what is given* in such a way as to leave more for proletarian industry. *Make the deduction* from the peasant economy. And do not deduct *less*, for that would be to *subtract* from socialist industry and *add* to the peasant economy, etc.

But really, all of this is truly "*infantile*" rather than proletarian wisdom.

For the issue is by no means confined to the problem of *dividing a given* "national income" between the working class and the peasantry (for purposes of simplification we abstract here from private capital). The *focus* of the problem does not lie here at all. And that is what Comrade Preobrazhensky is completely incapable of understanding.

The focus of the problem consists of *increasing* the "national income," i.e., of increasing productive forces, and of doing so *in a way that will guarantee the growth of socialist production relations*.

And this is the type of problem that cannot possibly be reduced to simple division of a given sum, to operations of addition, subtraction, and division with *previously given magnitudes*.

The task is constantly *to raise* this "given sum" of "national income." That is why the question of "accumulation" in *socialist industry* is inevitably connected with the problem of "accumulation" in the *peasant economy*, which constitutes the *market* for industry and represents an aggregate of economic units, waiting to be attracted into the state economy and gradually transformed.

The question of *the domestic market's absorptive capacity* is not even raised by Comrade Preobrazhensky. Yet this is the central question of our economy. In only one section of his work does Comrade Preobrazhensky write: "The obstacles that the state economy encounters on this road (i.e., on Preobrazhensky's road—N.B.) arise not from inadequate economic power with which to carry out this policy, but principally from the *deficient purchasing power of the private economy*" (emphasis added—N.B.).

Not another word about this question is to be found. Yet it would appear that precisely this question deserves a good deal of thought.

If such an "obstacle" is *at hand*, is it possible to avoid taking it into account? Suppose that we follow Comrade Preobrazhensky's preference and do not "make a deduction" from "socialist industry," do not become involved in "philanthropy," but pursue Preobrazhensky's "line" "to its victorious conclusion," despite all "obstacles." What will the inevitable result be? It will be a curtailment of demand, a sales crisis, a halt in the process of social reproduction, the collapse of industry, etc. In other words, the net result of the "socialist-proletarian," "antiphilanthropic," and other positions of Comrade Preobrazhensky is to undermine and destroy socialist industry and the national economy as a whole.

The methodological roots of Comrade Preobrazhensky's errors are perfectly "visible": in the first place, he views the question in *static* rather than *dynamic* terms (the division of a *given* rather than a *changing* sum); secondly, he views socialist industry in *isolation* from, not in *connection* with, the peasant economy (in his mind the sole "link" is in the deductions—he does not understand that accumulation in socialist industry, when peasant farms have great weight, is a function of accumulation in the peasant economy).

Speaking bluntly, Comrade Preobrazhensky recommends to the proletariat that it *slit the throat* of a hen that is laying golden eggs, the argument being that it is philanthropic to feed the hen. What remarkable economic wit.

The problem is that for the proletariat, the peasantry is the *kind* of "hen" that must become a "man." And the proletariat *must help*, in its own interest and *in every possible way*. Only an original opportunist could fail to see this goal, one who does not see the basic revolutionary tasks of the working class and behaves like a *shortsighted miser, a skinflint*, who fears to put a kopek into circulation (lest it be lost!). It is not true that we must charge the highest possible price. We must accept a price that guarantees a growing income to socialist industry well *beyond a single year*, and we must try constantly to lower prices. This sort of pricing policy cannot be fashioned on the basis of the primitive formula of taking everything that is "technically attainable." That is a vulgar notion, which cannot possibly become the basis of our pricing policy.

Seeing the weakness of his own position, in one place Comrade Preobrazhensky declares: "I deliberately avoid saying 'on the basis of an increase in prices' because taxation not only is possible with falling prices but with us will take place precisely with falling or stable prices; this is possible because with a reduction in the cost of producing products, a price reduction does not go as far and leaves a balance that goes into the fund of socialist accumulation."

But not even this brief and lonely passage, concealed in brackets by Comrade Preobrazhensky in order to "ease" the "industrial" fervor of the author, can save the day.

Is it not monstrous that Comrade Preobrazhensky should even make such a "concession" as: "I deliberately avoid saying 'on the basis of an *increase* in prices'?"

There is hardly a single person so bold as to adopt the goal of always *raising* prices, from year to year and month to month. Hardly anyone would come out in support of such a costly system, with such a goal openly inscribed on its banner. And there is hardly a fool who would tolerate such a practice. That is why *such* a declaration from Comrade Preobrazhensky creates a strange impression.

But Comrade Preobrazhensky describes a prospect of falling or *stable* prices. We say: Everything must be done *to ensure that prices fall*, that we do *not* experience economic stagnation, and that socialism in *this* way generally *benefits*, for the rate of accumulation will be more rapid throughout the country, especially in socialist industry, when it can really acquire additional profit and rely on the enormous concentrated might of the state apparatus as a whole.

A word or two concerning the roads to socialism and "philanthropy." Lenin said:

Strictly speaking there is "only" one thing we have left to do, and that is to make our people so "enlightened" that they understand all the advantages of everybody's participating in the work of the cooperatives and organize this participation. "Only" that. There are now no other devices needed to advance to socialism.... Therefore, our rule must be: As little philosophizing and as few acrobatics as possible. (Lenin, "On Cooperation")<sup>10</sup>

And somewhat earlier: "A social system emerges only if it has the financial backing of a definite class.... At present we have to realize that the cooperative system is the social system to which we must give more than normal assistance, and we must act upon that realization."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works* (Moscow, 1966) vol. XXXIII, pp. 469-70.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p. 469.



It would be excessive to produce the passages by Lenin in which he says that we must demonstrate to the peasant that we can produce more cheaply than the capitalist system.

There is a "distance of enormous length," as every open-minded reader will see, between the system of views developed by Comrade Preobrazhensky, on the one hand, and the Leninist teaching concerning the economic bloc of workers and peasants, on the other. The time has come for us really to understand that we need "as little philosophizing and as few acrobatics as possible" and more Leninist *wisdom*, which is simple, like all great things—but simple in a special way that must be seen and studied through to the end.

#### 5. MONOPOLISTIC PARASITISM OR A SOCIALIST MOVEMENT FORWARD?

The question of pricing policy also has great importance from another general point of view. To be precise, every monopoly bears within itself a certain conservative principle. Comrade Preobrazhensky is quite correct in remarking that we cannot ignore a basic fact: socialist industry is built upon the ruins of *monopoly* capitalism. Comrade Preobrazhensky is also quite justified in his position that this monopolistic structure, under the domination of the proletariat, undergoes further *development*, and that enormous economic power is, for this reason, concentrated in proletarian hands.

All of these observations are true, so true that they are common knowledge. But here is what Comrade Preobrazhensky forgets, what he *has overlooked*: monopoly capitalism had, and still has, within itself a germ that has impeded, and still *impedes*, development of productive forces. The moving force of capitalism is *profit*. In capitalist society development of productive forces occurred through the mechanism of competition. Every capitalist, upon introducing a technological innovation, received an additional profit ("differential profit"). Competition obliged the other capitalists to *comply*, the struggle moved to a new basis, the "leading" capitalists introduced still more innovations, developed mass production even further, etc. The *means of struggle* were low prices, which also represented the market expression of growth by the productive forces. In this pattern one finds, moreover, one of the main historically progressive aspects of capitalism in comparison with all precapitalist modes of production. But when capitalist development closed the circle history had designed, it led to *monopoly* capitalist forms. The "sting of competition" in large measure disappeared. Profit was *guaranteed* to the monopoly form. There was no need to hurry, no purpose in advancing production further at the same frenzied tempo, for an additional, *cartel superprofit* was guaranteed.

True, *international* competition did not abate. But its effects within the country were paralyzed by high customs duties. That is why the elements of so-called "rotteness" appeared.

Now consider our situation. Here is what Comrade Preobrazhensky writes. Asserting that we must follow a policy "consciously designed for the exploitation of the private economy in all of its forms," our author continues:

Such a policy is possible because the state economy of the proletariat arises historically on the basis of monopoly capitalism. The latter, as a result of the liquidation of free competition, leads to creation of monopoly prices in the domestic market for products of the national industry. It receives an additional profit owing to the exploitation of small-scale production and *thus prepares the basis for the pricing policy of the period of primitive socialist accumulation*. But the concentration of all the large-scale industry of the country in the hands of a single trust, i.e., in the hands of the workers' state, *enormously increases the possibility of implementing, on the basis of monopoly, a pricing policy that will be only another form of taxing the private economy*. (emphasis added.—N.B.)

There follows the section on "obstacles," including the weakness of the home market, which we have quoted earlier. Very well, then. What do we have now?

The monopolistic tendency *has been intensified*.

The possibility of receiving a "ready-made" additional profit *has increased*.

These are the facts. But does it not follow that there is an *increased danger of parasitic decay and stagnation*? What is the guarantee *against* this stagnation?

Comrade Preobrazhensky would have done well to reflect upon this problem, this enormous problem—indeed, a problem, we should say, of *extraordinary* importance. Had he done so he would have reconstructed his entire theory of primitive socialist accumulation.

In our country there is no competition. The guaranteed profit does not accrue to private individuals. The economic executives are cadres of proletarian fighters; but they are also subject to human weaknesses, and might slip into a position of repose, instead of concern, anxiety, and trouble about the movement to communism. What is it that drives our economy forward? Just what? Where is the stimulus that *forces* (and *forces* is the word) the economy to move forward, *guarantees* this forward movement, and replaces the private economic stimulus of profit, which went to the private owner of the enterprise? Where is the *unique* mechanism in the economy of our transitional epoch?

We suggest that the guarantee lies in the *pressure of the broad masses*, above all, of the *workers*, and then of the peasant masses. Although we still operate in our country with a capitalist form of “profit,” making our accounts and calculations in these forms, nevertheless, *the levers of our forward movement are different*. We ourselves, the leading circles in the country, i.e., the party preeminently, express and reflect (“regulating,” “controlling,” “correcting,” etc.) this growth in the needs of the *masses*. In other words, despite the existence of the market and capitalist *forms* in our state economy, we are *already* beginning the transition from a type of economy that is led by *profit* to one that is guided by *the necessity of satisfying the needs of the masses* (and this is *one* of the signs of a socialist economy).

By no means do we suggest that in our country, with *this* type of relations, accumulation must proceed more slowly. On the contrary (and this fact must be *forcefully* underlined!), it is precisely because our objective must be the satisfaction of needs that the *pressure* of these needs will constantly grow. And it is precisely *for this reason* that the leading circles of our industry and our state as a whole will be forced to improve production in every way possible, to expand it and make it *less costly*. *Here* is the guarantee of our growth. Of course, the answer might be given, particularly under the influence of a variety of difficulties that arise along the way, that we are following a line “opposed to the economic managers.” But that would be nonsense. We understand very well the need to “regulate,” “control,” etc., “the pressure of needs.” But looking at the entire process in objective-historical terms, we must acknowledge that the basic lever of our economic progress is *here*, nowhere else.

Returning to pricing policy in the context of *these* different considerations, we come to state the *problem* as follows:

1. *We might implement a policy of rising prices*, using our monopolistic position. From the present viewpoint it is clear that this would be a maximal expression of the parasitic decay of a monopolistic economy.

2. *We might orient ourselves toward stable prices*. Then we would have “normal” decay, economic stagnation, extremely slow accumulation within the country, and economic vegetation.

3. *We might orient ourselves toward ever-lower prices*. This would be an expression of growth in the productive forces, an expression of production, etc. It would express a *forward movement*, i.e., in our circumstances, a movement toward socialism and, what is more, one in which the rate of accumulation would attain maximum speed.

In this connection we must avoid giving grounds for unwarranted objections.

*In the first place*, it must be kept in mind, as Comrade Preobrazhensky himself has quite correctly pointed out, that even with *declining* prices for the products of our industry, we can acquire an *additional* “profit” at the expense of the petit bourgeois economy. The whole

question, to be precise, is whether we take a rest once we have a guaranteed monopolistic profit in our pocket, or whether we move *forward*. But it is *impossible* to move forward at a rapid rate without reducing prices, developing productive forces, etc.

*In the second place*, it would be nonsense for us to *renounce usage* of our monopolistic position. But we must use it within such limits as will not contract, but instead will increase, the capacity of the domestic market. Moreover, we must use every instance of growth in such a way as to expand the scale of production, cheapen production, lower costs, and thus allow lower prices in each successive production cycle.

Or else we can do something different.

According to Preobrazhensky, matters stand this way:

We must guarantee the possibility, "on the basis of monopoly, of a *pricing policy that will be only another form of taxing* (and Preobrazhensky does not mean replacing open taxes with disguised forms; the existing taxes remain in force—N.B.). *The obstacles...arise principally from deficient purchasing power,*" etc.

In our opinion, that is not how matters stand at all. To be precise, we say that we must orient ourselves *toward the lowest possible prices*, toward satisfying the masses, etc. But the expensiveness of our production, the high costs, etc., serve as an *obstacle* to our goal. *For this reason* we must do everything in order to lower these costs.

The difference of principle between our position and Comrade Preobrazhensky's is not difficult to see. Nor is it difficult to see that in its developed form the policy of Comrade Preobrazhensky will lead to a position of *monopolistic parasitism*.

If we now recall what was said above about "parasitism," "colonies," "swallowing up," etc., it will again not be difficult to ascertain that for Comrade Preobrazhensky all of these positions are *bogged down* in the theory of what we would call "monopolistic complacency," which threatens to become a theory of "*monopolistic parasitism*." The "analogy" with "decaying" capitalism would then be complete, but "socialist accumulation" would scarcely be any better off as a result of this "analogy."<sup>12</sup>

#### 6. THE WORKER-PEASANT BLOC FROM THE POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW AND THE POSITION OF COMRADE PREOBRAZHENSKY

From the foregoing discussion it is apparent that Comrade Preobrazhensky's position is a threat to the bloc of workers and peasants, the bloc upon which the entire position of orthodox Bolshevism has been, and continues to be, built. For it is not difficult to understand that in the period when the working class is in power, its political hegemony and political leadership cannot be stable unless it rests upon a basis of *economic hegemony*. And this economic hegemony can be realized in no way other than by adaptation of industry

<sup>12</sup> We are not able to enter here into a detailed analysis of one of Comrade Preobrazhensky's general theoretical positions in which he describes the process of socialist accumulation as a struggle between two laws: the law of socialist accumulation, and the law of value. In Comrade Preobrazhensky's opinion, the law of socialist accumulation partly paralyzes and partly "repeals" the law of value, which in the present period recedes completely into the background.

Here we shall make this point: the additional "profit" of the advanced economic complexes arises: (1) because of the fact that the individual cost in this case is lower than the social, i.e., on the basis of the law of value, (2) from the fact of monopoly. If one considers a long interval of time, it is not difficult to see that the first law expresses and depends on *development* of the productive forces, whereas the second is more or less connected with conservative tendencies in the sense discussed in the text. On the other hand, the law of value, which in an unorganized society is also the law by which social labor is allocated, represents a definite limit to monopoly. For there is an objective limit in the allocation of productive forces, and once it is exceeded, an acute crisis is inevitable. Eventually a universal "monopoly," i.e., a comprehensive organization of society, converts the spontaneous law of value into a conscious "law" of planned economic policy, a law of the rational allocation of productive forces. Thus, the matter is far more complicated than Comrade Preobrazhensky indicates.

to the peasant market, taking gradual possession of this market, the penetration of new methods into agricultural production thanks to the assistance of industry, the gradual inclusion of the peasantry in the cooperative network, and, finally, the creation of a new technical foundation (electrification) in accord with the growth of socialist accumulation.

The policy Comrade Preobrazhensky proposes entails a rupture of the worker-peasant bloc or, at the very least, *undermining* it severely.

Moreover, it is extremely characteristic that Comrade Preobrazhensky, completely in the spirit of the old "economists," sharply detaches economics from politics, treating politics not as "concentrated economics," but as some kind of "thing-in-itself" from which one can abstract and without which one can "manage affairs" in the spirit of "socialist accumulation."

We recall how briefly Comrade Preobrazhensky dealt with the significance of the basic "obstacle" to his policy, with the question of the capacity of the domestic market. Now let us add that following this recollection, we find such a passage as this: "I do not mention here the difficulties of a political nature that result from the relations between the working class and the peasantry..."

And he keeps his promise: he says nothing more.

All the same, there is one place in his work that reflects the total thoughtlessness and eclecticism of Comrade Preobrazhensky's construction.

"Playing" with his analogies (and playing seriously), Comrade Preobrazhensky writes, among other things:

With regard to colonial plundering, a socialist state, carrying out a policy of equal rights among nationalities and their voluntary entry into one or another national union, rejects in principle all methods in this area that involve the use of force. This source of primitive accumulation is closed to it from the very outset and forever.

It is quite different in the case of the exploitation of all precapitalist forms to the benefit of socialism. Taxation (of them—N.B.)...must play a very great, a directly decisive role in such peasant countries as the Soviet Union.

We shall not dwell on a number of minor contradictions the author expresses on this question. We shall take the bull by the horns. We shall ask Comrade Preobrazhensky why, in *this* case (the case of nationalities), the *political* motive ("a policy of equal rights") compels the author to retouch his "fundamental law"—even if only on one page, for elsewhere he by no means says the same thing—whereas in the "case" of the worker-peasant bloc he limits himself to the announcement: "I do not mention...the difficulties of a political nature." This is really a lack of principle, inconsistency, and an inability to make ends meet!!

Things look all the more peculiar when one realizes that the question of economic policy and policy in general in *former* (former, Comrade Preobrazhensky!) colonies is but a more *complex*, somewhat altered question of the relation of the working class to the peasantry in general! One would think that this truth had been adequately chewed over in the literature and in decisions of our congresses and conventions. Who would have thought otherwise? Yet comrades such as Preobrazhensky stumble "at this point" even when everything is in perfect order.

It is somewhat amusing to examine the essentials of Comrade Preobrazhensky's arguments. For example, take his position on the inadmissibility of "colonial plunder" "in the case of" the nationality question. And are such items as the laws of "enclosure" (naturally, not in the direct sense of the word), "admissible" where there is no "nationality question"? And if not, why not?

One has merely to pose this single question in order to see the entire falsity of the "Preobrazhensky-ist" line.

This line contradicts *the basis for the policy of the worker-peasant bloc*.

Pursuit of this bloc is the most *essential* aspect of all policy in the transition period. For it is typical in the transition period to have a basically two-class society in which the problems of town and country, industry and agriculture, large- and small-scale production, a rational plan and market anarchy, etc., give expression to the central *class* problem, the problem of the relation between the working class and the peasantry. To *detach* economics from politics, or to avoid politics along the entire front, is tantamount to not understanding the problem *as a whole*, not seeing its historical meaning, and to setting aside what is *basic* and cannot be hidden or spirited away.

We have the option in the transition period of orienting ourselves toward the bloc of workers and peasants under the leadership of the proletariat, in which case this line must constitute the fundamental principle of our activities always and everywhere.

Or else we can treat the bloc as a "witty remark." Then we can allow such "liberties of the nobility" as Comrade Preobrazhensky contemplates. But then we must be totally aware that we are going *against the worker-peasant bloc* and adopting a *different*, non-Leninist appraisal of the moving forces of the revolution together with a basically different notion of the path of the entire revolutionary process.

And then we must *choose*.

There is no need to indicate *what* our choice must be. For Leninism has been confirmed not simply by logical argument, however complete such arguments might be, but also by the experience of at least three revolutions.

#### 7. COMRADE PREOBRAZHENSKY'S "LAW" CONSIDERED AS A WHOLE

Now we should like to say a few words concerning the general formulation of the "law." Above all, we must notice the confusion in the very content of this "law"—confusion that at first sight is hidden, invisible.

Let us imagine two types of countries: an industrial country with an insignificant peasant-agrarian appendage, and a peasant country with a weakly developed industry.



*The white part is the peasant economy. The black is industry and large-scale agriculture, which are transferred to the proletariat.*

After the socialist transformation, the black part (industry and large-scale agriculture) fall into proletarian hands. When the process of accumulation begins, it is no wonder that in the first case the "specific gravity" of surplus labor in industry will have greater significance for socialist accumulation, whereas in the second case its significance will be immeasurably less. But this position is a real truism; it is merely another expression of the fact that in the first case the "specific gravity" of *industry* is much greater than in the second case.

Comrade Preobrazhensky, however, presents *another* position and links it *with* the "truism." Since the other position is not always obligatory, the result is a *falsehood*. To be precise, Comrade Preobrazhensky speaks of the equivalence or, more exactly, of the *nonequivalence of exchange* between town and country. He suggests that the greater the

specific gravity of the peasant economy, the less is the equivalence of exchange, and vice versa. But as we have mentioned, this condition is not at all obligatory. Imagine a highly developed economic complex, and assume that within this complex the peasant economy has a completely insignificant weight (large-scale agricultural production and concentrated industry predominate). Does this condition mean that the specific gravity of the surplus labor, coming from the peasantry into the fund of socialist accumulation is great? No, it is inconsequential. But would that fact imply that here equivalent exchange is obligatory? Nothing of the kind. For the *nonequivalence* can, in fact, be *very great, owing to the enormous differences in technical-economic structure*. Even with *low prices* (in absolute terms) for the products of industry, the peasant will receive an incomplete equivalent because his individual expenses on a unit of grain will be *much* higher than the expenses in large-scale agriculture. For that reason there is an inevitable discrepancy in labor values during the exchange process, even if we think in terms of "two systems," as Comrade Preobrazhensky does.

The question, therefore, is by no means so simple as it appears to Comrade Preobrazhensky.

In order to examine the "law" more closely, we must first analyze the problem of what, in essence, Comrade Preobrazhensky understands by "socialist accumulation," etc. Observe what the author himself has to say:

By *socialist* accumulation we mean the production and addition to fixed capital of a surplus product that is not subject to further distribution among the agents of socialist production, but instead serves for expanded reproduction. *Primitive socialist* accumulation, in contrast, means accumulation in the hands of the state of material resources that originate mainly in sources lying outside the state *economic complex* (emphasis added—N.B.). This accumulation must play an extremely important role in a backward peasant economy, greatly hastening the moment when...this (state—N.B.) economy will finally acquire purely economic superiority over capitalism.... Accumulation of the first sort, i.e., at the expense of the nonstate sphere, clearly predominates in this period. Therefore, we must refer to this whole stage as the period of *primitive* or preliminary socialist accumulation.... The fundamental law of our Soviet economy is precisely *the law of primitive or preliminary* (emphasis added—N.B.) socialist accumulation. To this law are subordinated all the basic processes of economic life within the purview of the state economy. Moreover, this law modifies and partly does away with the law of value.... *Thus, not only can we speak of primitive socialist accumulation but we can understand nothing of the essence of the Soviet economy unless we understand the central role played in this economy BY THE LAW OF SOCIALIST ACCUMULATION.* (The italics are the author's; the capitals are ours.—N.B.)

At the outset let us notice several small points. In the first place, a *product* cannot be added to capital; in the second place, accumulation involves more than the addition of *fixed* capital alone (what of capital converted into materials?); in the third place, "further distribution among the agents of socialist production" cannot be counterpoised to "expanded reproduction." If, for example, new workers enter the process of production, that *means* the expansion of production. But all of these points, of course, are comparatively minor.

The issue becomes more vital and serious when we turn to the basic "definitions" of Comrade Preobrazhensky.

He makes a sharp *distinction* between two concepts: the concept of socialist accumulation, and the concept of *primitive* socialist accumulation. He says quite directly: "*socialist* accumulation" means so and so. "*Primitive* socialist accumulation, IN CONTRAST," means such and such.

In accordance with this distinction he speaks of the law of *primitive* socialist accumulation. But how amazed we are when we later see, literally a few lines below, that the small word *primitive* drops out! And we are even more amazed when we perceive that in the principal formulation of the fundamental law (as we cited it earlier) this word *similarly* disappears. There it is said: "The fundamental law of socialist accumulation is the main-spring of the entire Soviet economy. But it is probable that this law has universal significance."

Well, then, tell us, for God's sake, *just what* law you are talking about!

The reader might think, perhaps, that this confusion is but an accidental slip and that it does not deserve our attention: everyone makes an error in a hasty work! Nevertheless, we will look for certain *roots* of this obvious muddle.

We have seen that the period of primitive accumulation is *mainly* defined as the period of exploiting the private economy. As Comrade Preobrazhensky stresses, it lasts until the state "finally acquires purely economic superiority over capitalism."

Here we are given (1) the material-economic *content* of the process, and (2) its historical *limits*.

Now let us try to sort these positions out.

It would seem that when Comrade Preobrazhensky speaks of the fundamental laws, etc., one might suppose that he is speaking of capitalism *in the same country* in which the proletariat has seized power.

Then the "superiority" ("the commanding heights") would be guaranteed relatively quickly. This *is* the "economic superiority over capitalism" that can be *lost* through an incorrect policy. But this superiority can be maintained, for when the productive forces are following a rising curve, the proletariat also has at its disposal the *law of large-scale production*.

But if that is the case, it is perfectly obvious that the formulation of the fundamental law given by Comrade Preobrazhensky is unacceptable, because that formulation has to do with *a much longer historical period*.

Suppose, then, that Comrade Preobrazhensky is speaking of capitalism in other countries, which are technologically more advanced.

In this case it is quite clear that "*primitive* accumulation" merges in general terms with accumulation. A very long time will pass, for example, until we in the USSR reach the American level. All of this time will be shown in the column of *primitive* accumulation. Thus, our "primitiveness" will truly become permanent.

And that is where the dog is buried. Comrade Preobrazhensky unwittingly converts *primitive* socialist accumulation into regular socialist accumulation. Conversion of the law from a "primitive" into an *ordinary* law is a parallel process. And all of this is needed in order that the policy of a period in which *industry lived at the expense of the peasantry can be extended right up to electrification*.

In these miraculous transformations, therefore, we find *exactly the same logic* as we have detected in all the previous stages of our analysis. This is the logic that comes with an incorrect understanding of the mutual relations to be established between the proletariat and the peasantry, as classes that are politically linked and are the bearers of certain economic forms. This is the core of Comrade Preobrazhensky's work. The only problem is that the core is rotten.

The reader who is accustomed to dealing with analysis of diverse ideological nuances will at once discern here a shop-centered ideology, which has "nothing to do" with other classes and does not care about the basic problem of proletarian policy, the problem of the worker-peasant bloc and proletarian hegemony within the bloc. Only a single small step further would be needed in the same direction in order to give us a complete semi-Menshevik ideology along the lines of the old trade unionists of the Russian model: spit on the country bumpkins, more concessions to foreign capital, not a kopek for cooperative

nonsense and agrarian schemes, more pressure on the peasantry for the sake of the "proletariat," etc. *This* is the direction in which such ideology "grows." And it is perfectly understandable that the overwhelming mass of party members reject—and sharply reject—these and related "theories." Such "theories" can *destroy* the worker-peasant bloc (if they have the chance to "seize" the masses, which they fortunately do not, and will not, have). Such "theories" can *destroy* that granite foundation upon which the workers' state, our Soviet Union, is built.

N. I. Bukharin, *Selected Writings on the State and Socialism*. Translated, edited and introduced by Richard B. Day (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1982), 150-182. The notes are those of Bukharin, with the reference to Lenin dated to more recent, English, editions by Day. References to page numbers in Preobrazhensky have been omitted.



## STALIN, SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY VERSUS PERMANENT REVOLUTION

17 December 1924

*In the ongoing polemics with Trotsky, and especially the concerted attacks on his old theory of "permanent revolution" and on "Trotskyism," the notion of "socialism in one country" was first advanced by Stalin. Trotsky and the other oppositionists had raised the question of how genuinely "socialist" the regime was, which in turn was tied to older ideas that a truly socialist regime could not survive in Russia without the help of socialist revolutions in the industrially more advanced countries of Europe. Yet, by 1924, prospects for such revolutions were more and more remote. Stalin, in attacking Trotsky, now began to develop what would be both a brilliant tactical move and his first major statement of theory. The theory of "socialism in one country" fit well with the situation in Russia and internationally and further strengthened Stalin's position as a party leader. At the same time Stalin reaffirmed the international role of the Revolution, stressing both the importance of support from the Soviet state for the success of revolutions elsewhere and the importance of international proletarian support for the well-being of the Soviet state. However, he did not make the survival of Soviet Russia, at least in any near term, directly dependent upon the spread of revolution elsewhere. His formulation was appealing to the new breed of party leaders, especially given the existing international setting. His citation of Lenin to bolster his argument, no matter how far Lenin had to be stretched, was by now a standard technique in party polemics. Abridged.*

J. V. Stalin

*The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists*

### I

The External and Internal Setting for the October Revolution

[This section omitted—R.W.]

### II

Two Specific Features of the October Revolution—or October and Trotsky's Theory of "Permanent" Revolution

There are two specific features of the October Revolution which must be understood first of all if we are to comprehend the inner meaning and the historical significance of that revolution.



What are these features?

Firstly, the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat was born in our country as a power which came into existence on the basis of an alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry, the latter being led by the proletariat. Secondly, the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat became established in our country as a result of the victory of socialism in one country—a country in which capitalism was little developed—while capitalism was preserved in other countries where capitalism was more highly developed....

According to Lenin, the revolution draws its strength primarily from among the workers and peasants of Russia itself. According to Trotsky, the necessary strength can be found *only* “in the arena of the world proletarian revolution.”

But what if the world revolution is fated to arrive with some delay? Is there any ray of hope for our revolution? Trotsky offers no ray of hope, for “the contradictions in the position of a workers’ government...could be solved *only*...in the arena of the world proletarian revolution.” According to this plan, there is but one prospect left for our revolution: to vegetate in its own contradictions and rot away while waiting for the world revolution.

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat according to Lenin?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a power which rests on an alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry for “the complete overthrow of capital” and for “the final establishment and consolidation of socialism.”

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat according to Trotsky?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a power which comes “into hostile collision” with “the broad masses of the peasantry” and seeks the solution of its “contradictions” *only* “in the arena of the world proletarian revolution.”

What difference is there between this “theory of permanent revolution” and the well-known theory of Menshevism which repudiates the concept of dictatorship of the proletariat?

Essentially, there is no difference.

There can be no doubt at all. “Permanent revolution” is not a mere underestimation of the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement. “Permanent revolution” is an underestimation of the peasant movement which leads to the *repudiation* of Lenin’s theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Trotsky’s “permanent revolution” is a variety of Menshevism.

This is how matters stand with regard to the first specific feature of the October Revolution....

The second specific feature of the October Revolution lies in the fact that this revolution represents a model of the practical application of Lenin’s theory of the proletarian revolution.

He who has not understood this specific feature of the October Revolution will never understand either the international nature of this revolution, or its colossal international might, or the specific features of its foreign policy.

“Uneven economic and political development,” says Lenin, “is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organised socialist production, would stand up *against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states.” For “the free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states”.

The opportunists of all countries assert that the proletarian revolution can begin—if it is to begin anywhere at all, according to their theory—only in industrially developed countries, and that the more highly developed these countries are industrially the more chances there are for the victory of socialism. Moreover, according to them, the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, and one in which capitalism is little developed at that, is excluded as something absolutely improbable. As far back as the period of the war, Lenin, taking as his basis the law of the uneven development of the imperialist states, opposed to the opportunists his theory of the proletarian revolution about the victory of socialism in one country, even if that country is one in which capitalism is less developed.

It is well known that the October Revolution fully confirmed the correctness of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution.

How do matters stand with Trotsky's "permanent revolution" in the light of Lenin's theory of the victory of the proletarian revolution in one country?

Let us take Trotsky's pamphlet *Our Revolution* (1906).

Trotsky writes:

"Without direct state support from the European proletariat, the working class of Russia will not be able to maintain itself in power and to transform its temporary rule into a lasting socialist dictatorship. This we cannot doubt for an instant."

What does this quotation mean? It means that the victory of socialism in one country, in this case Russia, is impossible "without direct state support from the European proletariat," i.e., before the European proletariat has conquered power.

What is there in common between this "theory" and Lenin's thesis on the possibility of the victory of socialism "in one capitalist country taken separately"?

Clearly, there is nothing in common.

But let us assume that Trotsky's pamphlet, which was published in 1906, at a time when it was difficult to determine the character of our revolution, contains inadvertent errors and does not fully correspond to Trotsky's views at a later period. Let us examine another pamphlet written by Trotsky, his *Peace Programme*, which appeared before the October Revolution of 1917 and has now (1924) been republished in his book *The Year 1917*. In this pamphlet Trotsky criticises Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution about the victory of socialism in one country and opposes to it the slogan of a United States of Europe. He asserts that the victory of socialism in one country is impossible, that the victory of socialism is possible only as the victory of several of the principal countries of Europe (Britain, Russia, Germany), which combine into a United States of Europe: otherwise it is not possible at all. He says quite plainly that "a victorious revolution in Russia or in Britain is inconceivable without a revolution in Germany, and vice versa."

"The only more or less concrete historical argument," says Trotsky, "advanced against the slogan of a United States of Europe was formulated in the Swiss *Sotsial-Demokrat* (at that time the central organ of the Bolsheviks.—*J. St.*) in the following sentence. 'Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.' From this the *Sotsial-Demokrat* draws the conclusion that the victory of socialism is possible in one country, and that therefore there is no reason to make the dictatorship of the proletariat in each separate country contingent upon the establishment of a United States of Europe. That capitalist development in different countries is uneven is an absolutely incontrovertible argument. But this unevenness is itself extremely uneven. The capitalist level of Britain, Austria, Germany or France is not identical. But in comparison with Africa and Asia all these countries represent capitalist 'Europe,' which has grown ripe for the social revolution. That no country in its struggle must 'wait' for others, is an elementary thought which it is useful and necessary to reiterate in order that the idea of concurrent international action may not be replaced by the idea of temporising international inaction. Without

waiting for the others, we begin and continue the struggle nationally, in the full confidence that our initiative will give an impetus to the struggle in other countries; but if this should not occur, it would be hopeless to think—as historical experience and theoretical considerations testify—that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe, or that a socialist Germany could exist in isolation in a capitalist world.”

As you see, we have before us the same theory of the simultaneous victory of socialism in the principal countries of Europe which, as a rule, excludes Lenin’s theory of revolution about the victory of socialism in one country.

It goes without saying that for the *complete* victory of socialism, for a *complete* guarantee against the restoration of the old order, the united efforts of the proletarians of several countries are necessary. It goes without saying that, without the support given to our revolution by the proletariat of Europe, the proletariat of Russia could not have held out against the general onslaught, just as without the support given by the revolution in Russia to the revolutionary movement in the West the latter could not have developed at the pace at which it has begun to develop since the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia. It goes without saying that we need support. But what does support of our revolution by the West-European proletariat imply? Is not the sympathy of the European workers for our revolution, their readiness to thwart the imperialists’ plans of intervention—is not all this support, real assistance? Unquestionably it is. Without such support, without such assistance, not only from the European workers but also from the colonial and dependent countries, the proletarian dictatorship in Russia would have been hard pressed. Up to now, has this sympathy and this assistance, coupled with the might of our Red Army and the readiness of the workers and peasants of Russia to defend their socialist fatherland to the last—has all this been sufficient to beat off the attacks of the imperialists and to win us the necessary conditions for the serious work of construction? Yes, it has been sufficient. Is this sympathy growing stronger, or is it waning? Unquestionably, it is growing stronger. Hence, have we favourable conditions, not only for pushing on with the organising of socialist economy, but also, in our turn, for giving support to the West-European workers and to the oppressed peoples of the East? Yes, we have. This is eloquently proved by the seven years’ history of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia. Can it be denied that a mighty wave of labour enthusiasm has already risen in our country? No, it cannot be denied.

After all this, what does Trotsky’s assertion that a revolutionary Russia could not hold out in the face of a conservative Europe signify?

It can signify only this: firstly, that Trotsky does not appreciate the inherent strength of our revolution; secondly, that Trotsky does not understand the inestimable importance of the moral support which is given to our revolution by the workers of the West and the peasants of the East; thirdly, that Trotsky does not perceive the internal infirmity which is consuming imperialism today.

Carried away by his criticism of Lenin’s theory of the proletarian revolution, Trotsky unwittingly dealt himself a smashing blow in his pamphlet *Peace Programme* which appeared in 1917 and was republished in 1924.

But perhaps this pamphlet, too, has become out of date and has ceased for some reason or other to correspond to Trotsky’s present views? Let us take his later works, written after the victory of the proletarian revolution in *one country*, in Russia. Let us take, for example, Trotsky’s “Postscript,” written in 1922, for the new edition of his pamphlet *Peace Programme*. Here is what he says in this “Postscript”:

“The assertion reiterated several times in the *Peace Programme* that a proletarian revolution cannot culminate victoriously within national bounds may perhaps seem to some readers to have been refuted by the nearly five years’ experience of our Soviet Republic. But such a conclusion would be unwarranted. The fact that the workers’ state has held out against the whole world in one country, and a backward

country at that, testifies to the colossal might of the proletariat, which in other, more advanced, more civilised countries will be truly capable of performing miracles. But while we have held our ground as a state politically and militarily, we have not arrived, or even begun to arrive, at the creation of a socialist society....As long as the bourgeoisie remains in power in the other European countries we shall be compelled, in our struggle against economic isolation, to strive for agreement with the capitalist world; at the same time it may be said with certainty that these agreements may at best help us to mitigate some of our economic ills, to take one or another step forward, but real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible *only after the victory* [Stalin's added italics—R.W.] of the proletariat in the major European countries."

Thus speaks Trotsky, plainly sinning against reality and stubbornly trying to save his "permanent revolution" from final shipwreck.

It appears, then, that, twist and turn as you like, we not only have "not arrived," but we have "not even begun to arrive" at the creation of a socialist society. It appears that some people have been hoping for "agreements with the capitalist world," but it also appears that nothing will come of these agreements, for, twist and turn as you like, "real progress of a socialist economy" will not be possible until the proletariat has been victorious in the "major European countries."

Well, the, since there is still no victory in the West, the only "choice" that remains for the revolution in Russia is: either to rot away or to degenerate into a bourgeois state.

It is no accident that Trotsky has been talking for two years now about the "degeneration" of our Party.

It is no accident that last year Trotsky prophesied the "doom" of our country.

How can this strange "theory" be reconciled with Lenin's theory of the "victory of socialism in one country"?

How can this strange "prospect" be reconciled with Lenin's view that the New Economic Policy will enable us "to build the foundations of socialist economy"?

How can this "permanent" hopelessness be reconciled, for instance, with the following words of Lenin:

"Socialism is no longer a matter of the distant future, or an abstract picture, or an icon. We still retain our old bad opinion of icons. We have dragged socialism into everyday life, and here we must find our way. This is the task of our day, the task of our epoch. Permit me to conclude by expressing the conviction that, difficult as this task may be, new as it may be compared with our previous task, and no matter how many difficulties it may entail, we shall all—not in one day, but in the course of several years—all of us together fulfil it whatever happens so the NEP Russia will become socialist Russia".

How can this "permanent" gloominess of Trotsky's be reconciled, for instance, with the following words of Lenin:

"As a matter of fact, state power over all large-scale means of production, state power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat, etc.—is not this all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society from the co-operatives, from the co-operatives alone, which we formerly looked down upon as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to look down upon as such now, under the NEP? Is this not all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society? This is not yet the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for this building".

It is plain that these two views are incompatible and cannot in any way be reconciled. Trotsky's "permanent revolution" is the repudiation of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution; and conversely, Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution is the repudiation of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Lack of faith in the strength and capacities of our revolution, lack of faith in the strength and capacity of the Russian proletariat—that is what lies at the root of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Hitherto only *one* aspect of the theory of "permanent revolution" has usually been noted—lack of faith in the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement. Now, in fairness, this must be supplemented by *another* aspect—lack of faith in the strength and capacity of the proletariat in Russia.

What difference is there between Trotsky's theory and the ordinary Menshevik theory that the victory of socialism in one country, and in a backward country at that, is impossible without the preliminary victory of the proletarian revolution "in the principal countries of Western Europe"?

Essentially, there is no difference.

There can be no doubt at all. Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" is a variety of Menshevism....

#### IV

#### The October Revolution as the Beginning of and the Pre-Condition for the World Revolution

There can be no doubt that the universal theory of a simultaneous victory of the revolution in the principal countries of Europe, the theory that the victory of socialism in one country is impossible, has proved to be an artificial and untenable theory. The seven years' history of the proletarian revolution in Russia speaks not for but against this theory. This theory is unacceptable not only as a scheme of development of the world revolution, for it contradicts obvious facts. It is still less acceptable as a slogan, for it fetters, rather than releases, the initiative of individual countries which, by reason of certain historical conditions, obtain the opportunity to break through the front of capital independently; for it does not stimulate an active onslaught on capital in individual countries, but encourages passive waiting for the moment of the "universal denouement"; for it cultivates among the proletarians of the different countries not the spirit of revolutionary determination, but the mood of Hamlet-like doubt over the question as to "what if the others fail to back us up?" Lenin was absolutely right in saying that the victory of the proletariat in one country is the "typical case," that "a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries" can only be a "rare exception".

But, as is well known, Lenin's theory of revolution is not limited only to this side of the question. It is also the theory of the development of the world revolution. The victory of socialism in one country is not a self-sufficient task. The revolution which has been victorious in one country must regard itself not as a self-sufficient entity, but as an aid, as a means *for* hastening the victory of the proletariat in all countries. For the victory of the revolution in one country, in the present case Russia, is not only the product of the uneven development and progressive decay of imperialism; it is at the same time the beginning of and the pre-condition for the world revolution....

While it is true that the *final* victory of socialism in the first country to emancipate itself is impossible without the combined efforts of the proletarians of several countries, it is equally true that the unfolding of the world revolution will be the more rapid and thorough, the more effective the assistance rendered by the first socialist country to the workers and labouring masses of all other countries.

In what should this assistance be expressed?

It should be expressed, firstly, in the victorious country achieving “the utmost possible in one country *for* the development, support and awakening of the revolution *in all countries*”.

It should be expressed, secondly, in that the “victorious proletariat” of one country, “having expropriated the capitalists and organised socialist production, would stand up...*against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states”.

The characteristic feature of the assistance given by the victorious country is not only that it hastens the victory of the proletarians of other countries, but also that, by facilitating this victory, it ensures the *final* victory of socialism in the first victorious country.

Most probably, in the course of development of the world revolution, side by side with the centres of imperialism in individual capitalist countries and with the system of these countries throughout the world, centres of socialism will be created in individual Soviet countries and a system of these centres throughout the world, and the struggle between these two systems will fill the history of the unfolding of the world revolution.

For, says Lenin, “the free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states”.

The world significance of the October Revolution lies not only in the fact that it constitutes a great beginning made by one country in causing a breach in the system of imperialism and that it is the first centre of socialism in the ocean of imperialist countries, but also in that it constitutes the first stage of the world revolution and a mighty base for its further development.

Therefore, not only those are wrong who forget the international character of the October Revolution and declare the victory of socialism in one country to be a purely national, and only a national, phenomenon, but also those who, although they bear in mind the international character of the October Revolution, are inclined to regard this revolution as something passive, merely destined to accept help from without. Actually, not only does the October Revolution need support from the revolution in other countries, but the revolution in those countries needs the support of the October Revolution in order to accelerate and advance the cause of overthrowing world imperialism.

Stalin, *Works*, VI: 375-420.



### 3 THE YEAR 1925

#### AN APPROVED LIST OF PROLETARIAN LITERATURE

January 1925

*Throughout this period, Soviet Communist Party leaders wrestled with the problem of art and literature, and especially with what was acceptable and what was not. Although they refused to give official backing to any one school of literature, (see party resolutions elsewhere in this volume), they were not indifferent to what was published and read. The following is a curious example of this via an attempt to influence what Soviet writers were available to foreign readers. In the process it gives a list of what the Soviet literary/political leadership found "best" and most desirable among works published in the Soviet Union. The authors mentioned by Lunacharsky as examples of unacceptable writers are a varied lot: "Mess Mend" was an extremely popular adventure story with mass appeal, while Artsybashev was a decadent type of sensationalist writer with more of an upper class appeal. Lunacharsky was People's Commissar for Enlightenment (Education) and thus had primary responsibility for literature, the arts, education and intellectual life in general. The exact dates of his letter and the list are not certain, but they would be approximately January 1925.*

#### I

##### *To Communist Newspapers, Periodicals and Publishing Houses of all Countries*

The working class of all countries is displaying a remarkable interest in everything which emanates from Soviet Russia, including proletarian literature.

Unfortunately, many newspapers, periodicals and publishing houses, not being properly informed, frequently translate and publish literary productions the artistic value, and what is more, the ideological content, of which do not warrant their publication. For instance, the excellent Communist organ of the German Communist Party ("Rote Fahne") is publishing Jim Dollar's sensational serial novel "Mess Mend," of rather doubtful ideological value. Another excellent Communist paper, the organ of the French Communist Party ("Humanite") is, we are told, publishing the works of Stepniak, which are now of purely historical value. And as to American labour newspapers, they publish even the works of Artsybashev, etc., etc.

It should be said that not all that has been written and published in Soviet Russia is either proletarian or desirable. In Soviet Russia, there are still bourgeois and petty bourgeois writers. Some who have adopted the platform of the Soviet Power are giving clever and truthful descriptions of past and present events in the country of the great October Revolution. But others again are still openly or secretly hostile to the Soviet Government and the Communist Party, which is fighting for the establishment of proletarian power throughout the world. Although their productions are published in Soviet Russia, they can on no account be considered as productions reflecting the Revolution.

Animated by the desire to help foreign labour newspapers, periodicals and publishing houses, the International Liaison Bureau of Proletarian Literature has compiled for the first time a list of productions of Russian proletarian writers and of writers in sympathy with the proletariat. This is not by any means a comprehensive list. Other lists will be published in the future from time to time.

It goes without saying that we must not concentrate our attention only on Russian proletarian belles *lettres*, but that we must also offer lists of first class literary productions by our comrade authors of all countries. We will shortly compile a list of works by the writers of some of the most important European countries.

Newspapers, periodicals and publishing houses desirous of translating or publishing the works of Russian comrades recommended by us, can do it themselves or they can get in touch with the International Liaison Bureau of Proletarian Literature through the Agitprop Department of the ECCI. If you choose the latter, the Bureau will have to arrange with you as to the sums necessary to cover translator's fees, postage, etc. Newspapers, periodicals and publishing houses wishing themselves to translate Russian works can obtain them through the Agitprop Department of the ECCI.

In the case of translations, the International Bureau would like to be informed what works are being translated and if the latter are being published with forewords by the authors themselves or by public men in Soviet Russia who are well-known abroad, etc.

We guarantee you before hand the authors' consent to have their works translated. We ask you to send five copies of all works which have been translated and published, to the following address: International Liaison Bureau for Proletarian Literature, c/o the Agitprop Department of the ECCI, Moscow.

A. Lunacharsky (Chairman). Sigismund Valaitis (Secretary).

### [II]

#### To Communist Newspapers, Periodicals, and Publishing Houses of all Countries!

In our issue of 8th January last (Vol. 5, No. 2) we published a notice under the above heading issued by the International Liaison Bureau of Proletarian Literature. The following list should be regarded as a supplement to this notice. Ed.

List of works by Russian writers which the Agitprop Department of the E. C. C. I. and the International Liaison Bureau of Proletarian Literature recommend for translation into foreign languages.

#### I. Poetic works.

1. Demian Bednyi: "The High Street," "In the Ring of Fire," "The Soviet Sentinels" and others.
2. Alexander Bezymensky: "Peter Smorodin," "The Cap," "The Party Membership Card." Extract from the first part of "The Little Town." Extracts from "Young Communist Life," "Snowshoes," "Lenin Day," "Party Membership Card No. 224,332," "Young Lenin Fighters," "Prelude to Spring."
3. Ivan Doronin: "The Steam Plough Driver," "The Love of the Fields for Spring."
4. Alexander Scharov: "Master Jacob," "Drunken Sleep," "The Song of the Chervonets," "Ice-floes," "The Factory Scholars," "We Keep Watch Over Our Country."

#### II. *Belles Lettres*.

I. A. Serafimovich: "The Iron Stream"—A tale, 160 pages in octavo form describing the Civil War in the Kuban district and on the coast of the Black Sea, the unexampled campaign of the poor population who, with their women and children, made their way across the waste steppes and mountains and through the encircling White forces in order to unite with the Red Army.

II. F. Berezovskii: "The Mother"—a tale, 64 pages. The author describes the situation in Siberia during the rule of Kolchak and the Interventionists. The mother is a working woman who blows up a munitions train belonging to the Whites and perishes at the same time.



—“In the Open Steppes,” a Romance in two parts, dealing with the Civil War in Kirgisia. 224 pages.

—“The Commune,” “The Red October,” description of an agricultural commune in Siberia.  
 III. Iurii Libedinskii: “The Week,” a story of the Civil War. 128 pages. This has already appeared in some American newspapers and in “Humanite.” It gives a magnificent description of the struggle of a Communist organisation in the provinces against the uprising of the Whites.

IV. Tarasov-Rodionov: “Linev,” a romance. 120 pages. Deals with the Civil War and the foreign interventions in Siberia.

V. Mikhail Platoshkin: “From the New Life,” a tale. 128 pages. The workers’ life in the Soviet Union, the fight of the old against the new.

VI. Dimitri Furmanov: “Chapaev,” a tale. 240 pages. Description of the Civil War in the Volga district. Gives the story of the celebrated leader of the Red Army, Chapaev.

—“The Red Landing Forces.” 32 Pages. Descriptions of the fight against the Whites.

VII. Georgi Nikiforov: “Two Generations.” The life of a lonely railway signalman.

—“The Little Engine-Drive.” The heroic act of the little son of an Engine-driver, who saves a Red train during the Civil War.

VIII. Markus Kollosov: “Thirteen,” a story. 16 pages. Deals with the contemporary life of the working youth and of the Communist youth.

—“Stengas,” a tale. 16 pages. Deals with the contemporary life of the young Communists.

IX. Vsevolod Ivanov: “The Armour-Train.” A story of the Siberian partisans. 96 pages.

X. A. Fadeev: “Flood.” A story of the first successes of the Communists in winning influence among the peasantry and in the Far East.

—“Against the Stream.” A story of the time of the transition of the Red Army from partisan troops into a regular army.

XI. Lydia Seifullina: “The Law Breakers.” An extraordinarily talented story of life in the children’s homes. 32 pages.

XII. Alexey Volskii: “God’s Anointed,” a tale. 24 pages.

—“Toni, the Bell Ringer,” a tale. 4 pages.

—“The Greens,” a tale. 8 pages.

—“The Village Correspondent,” a tale. 32 pages.

The majority of stories by Volskii are anti-religious in their content.

XIII. A. Andreev: “Light in the Darkness.” A story of the electrification of a remote village in the far north.

—“Little People Upon the Great Stage.” Story from the life of the theatre workers. 8 pages.

XIV. Vasilii Rachovskii: “The Conflagration,” a story of village life during the October days. 32 pages.

XV. Alexeevskii: “Lenin,” a tale. 16 pages.

XVI. Ivan Trachillo: “The Son of the Street.” A story of the life of neglected children. 16 pages.

—“Bilyal.” A story of the awakening class-consciousness of a Tartar shepherd. 16 pages.

XVII. Em. Maisky: “Three Fathers.” True to life history of the rights of the woman in Soviet Russia.

### III. Dramatic Works

I. A. Lunacharsky: “Thomas Campanello.” Drama in five acts. Life of a great utopian in the XV century.

II. V. Pletnev: “Lena.” Drama in five acts. The massacre in the Lena district in 1912.

III. S. Tretyakov: “Antigas.” A drama. How the workers of a Soviet factory rescue their factory.

IV. Belotserkovsky: “The Echo.” The fight of the American workers against the anti-Soviet intervention.

## IV. Theoretical and Instructive

- I. Platform of the art and thought of the Union of the Proletarian Writers.
- II. A. Lunacharsky: Article, "Marxism and Literature," from *Krasnaia nov.*
- III. G. Lelevich: "Alexander Bezymensky."
- IV. P. Kogan: "Serafimovitch."
- V. L. Sosnovsky: "Demian Bednyi."
- VI. S. Rodov: "Worker Correspondents and Proletarian Literature."

*International Press Correspondence*, V, No. 2 (12 January 1925): 25-26, and No. 15 (18 February 1925): 206-207.



## CHICHERIN ON BRITISH-SOVIET RELATIONS

4 January 1925

*In the aftermath of the breakdown of Soviet-British relations, Chicherin gave this assessment of the issues in a press interview. It was published in Izvestiia on 4 January. See also documents above on the "Zinoviev Letter" and related issues, between 25 October and 28 November, 1924.*

## [Chicherin's statement]

As it is well known, Mr. Chamberlain began his diplomatic relations with our diplomatic mission with two notes, one of which contained brief information as to the rejection by the Government of the Treaties of August 8, while the second emphatically reaffirmed the genuineness of the forged "Zinoviev letter" drawing therefrom extremely unfavorable conclusions as to Anglo-Soviet relations. A reply to this was given by us in two notes of Mr. Rakovsky. It may be recalled that these notes contained also our offer to submit to an impartial arbitration commission the questions concerning the "Zinoviev letter," our Government declaring officially that the letter was forged. We just received from Mr. Chamberlain an answer which is quite short but not quite clear; he declares that with reference to this matter he has nothing to add to his note of November 21. This means that the official statement of the Soviet Government to the effect that the "Zinoviev letter" is a forgery, is completely ignored by the Conservative Government of England. This means also that all the various arguments brought forward in the reply of Mr. Rakovsky are likewise ignored. This means finally that the British Government doesn't accept our offer to submit the question of the "Zinoviev letter" to an arbitration commission.

To any impartial observer this latter fact should be of deciding importance. We proposed to the British Government an impartial investigation of the matter with the purpose of finding out the truth. The British Government rejects that proposal. It doesn't wish to clear up the truth. Its refusal to accept an investigation of the matter by an arbitration commission shows that the British Government admits that it is wrong.

The British Government went even further than that. The representatives of the British Government have declared repeatedly that if they are unable to give documentary proof of the genuineness of the "Zinoviev letter" it is because the person who supplied that letter resides in Moscow and that as a result of the disclosure of his incognito his life might be endangered. Our Government took the British Government by its word. "Very well," was our answer, "we will meet you half way and we declare officially and categorically that we guarantee to your informer full immunity and liberty to leave our territory." This

was said in the form of a note sent by Mr. Rakovsky on December 22. Now, let the British Government mention the source of its information, and this will facilitate the clearing up of the matter; but if it refuses, then it brands itself as the party that is wrong.

This proposal of the Soviet Government was not accepted. In the meanwhile, on December 15, Mr. Chamberlain appeared in the House of Commons with proofs of the genuineness of the "Zinoviev letter" consisting in the fact that this letter was received from three or four different sources. We are ready to believe that Scotland Yard has not four but hundreds of informers, and should Mr. Chamberlain claim that he received the "Zinoviev letter" from three hundred sources and not only from three sources, the discovery of the truth will by no means be advanced thereby and will not in the slightest alter the fact that Mr. Chamberlain is afraid of the method proposed by us for the discovery of the truth through resorting to an arbitration commission.

It must be admitted that there exists a certain harmony between such an attitude of the British Government and the present role of British diplomacy all over the world. The British embassies and legations in practically all western and eastern countries are at present both the chief instigators of a hostile policy against the Soviet Union as well as a continuous source of false information about our country. When in Angora the rumor is spread about the breaking off of our relations with Turkey, these rumors can in both cases be traced to British sources. Such occurrences have become a continuous and documented feature. In spite of the denials of the British press, we know beyond any doubt that it was the British representative who promised to the Fan Noli Government of Albania help against Ahmed Zogu in the case it would expel the diplomatic mission of the Soviet Government, and that he threatened the virtually unarmed Fan Noli government that he would deliver it into the hands of Ahmed Zogu if it would refuse to order our representative to leave the country.

The fact that Mr. Chamberlain has declined our arbitration offer for clearing up the truth concerning the "Zinoviev letter" and that he has left without answer our statement offering immunity to the source of the forgery is in full harmony with the general policy of the British Government and of the other Governments that are under its influence. The Soviet Union whose aim is to develop peaceful relations with all countries and to work for the establishment of universal peace quietly takes note of these manifestations of an unfriendly policy by emphasizing to all nations that the disregarding of its arbitration proposal as well as of the impunity offer for the source of the forgery, are incontrovertible evidence that it is right.

*Russian Review*, 1 February 1925: 56-57.



### TROTSKY'S "RESIGNATION"

15 January 1925

*Trotsky had been the target of a massive campaign of personal and political vilification during the preceding months. Ill and apparently somewhat disheartened at the beginning of 1925, he wrote this letter to the Central Committee for its 20 January 1925 meeting. The letter, as with some of his other writings of the era, combines submission to the Party with refusal to admit error and rejection of the charges against him. It ended with a request to be released from his duties as Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council, which, along with his*

*closely related position of People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs, represented his most significant government posts. This was quickly accepted (see below).*

[Trotsky's Letter]

ESTEEMED COMRADES:

The first point on the agenda of the coming session of the Central Committee is the question of the resolutions of local organisations concerning the "attack" of Trotsky. Since I cannot take part in the work of the session on account of my illness, I think that I will facilitate the examination of this question if I give you the following brief explanation:

1. I have considered and I consider it possible to bring into the discussion sufficiently weighty refutations, both in the way of principle and of facts, against the accusation that I pursue the goal of "revising Leninism," and "belittling" (!) the role of Lenin. I have refrained, however, from responding, not only because I was sick, but also because, in the state of the present discussion, every utterance of mine on that theme, regardless of its character, tone, and content, would serve merely as a stimulus to deepen the polemic, transform it from a one-sided into a two-sided polemic, and give it a still more bitter character.

And at the present time, estimating the whole course of the discussion, and notwithstanding the fact that there have been advanced against me a multitude of false and actually monstrous accusations, I think that my silence has been right from the standpoint of the general interests of the party.

2. I can nowise accept, however, the accusation that I have pursued a special line (Trotskyism) and tried to revise Leninism. The opinion attributed to me, that not I came to Bolshevism, but Bolshevism to me, appears to me simply monstrous. In my introduction, "Lessons of October," I say explicitly (p. 62) that Bolshevism prepared itself for its role in the revolution by an implacable struggle, not only with populism and Menshevism, but with "conciliationism"—that is, with the tendency to which I belonged. It has never come into my head throughout these last eight years to consider any question from the standpoint of so-called "Trotskyism," which I considered, and consider politically long ago liquidated. Whether I have been right or mistaken in this or that question coming before the party, I approached the decision of it from the standpoint of the general theoretical and practical experience of our party. Not once in all these years has anybody said to me that any idea or proposal of mine represented a special tendency of "Trotskyism." This very word has swum out, to my complete surprise, only during the discussion about my book, "1917."

3. In this connection the question about the peasants has the greatest political significance. I decisively deny that the formula "Permanent Revolution," which relates wholly to the past, has determined for me in any degree whatever an unattentive attitude to the peasants under the circumstances of the Soviet revolution. If I have chanced to revert to the formula "Permanent Revolution" in any particular instance since October it was only in the sphere of "Party History"—that is, a reference to the past, and not in the sphere of present political problems. The effort to establish upon that question an irreconcilable disagreement between us has not justification, in my opinion either in the eight years' experience of the revolution which we have carried out together, or in the tasks of the future.

Likewise I reject allusions and references to my alleged "pessimistic" attitude to the fate of our Socialist construction, in view of the decreased *tempo* of the revolution in the West. In spite of all the difficulties which arise from our capitalistic encirclement, the economic and political resources of the Soviet dictatorship are very great. I have more than once developed and established this fact, at the direction of the party, especially at international congresses, and I consider that this thought preserves its whole strength in the present period of the historic development.

4. Upon the debated questions decided by the Thirteenth Congress of the party, I never appeared, either in the Central Committee or in the Soviet of Labour and Defence, much less outside the governing organs of the party and the Soviet institutions, with any proposals whatever which might either directly or indirectly raise issues which had once been decided. After the Thirteenth Congress there arose, or became more clearly defined, certain new problems of industrial, or Soviet, or international character. The solution of them has been a matter of exceptional difficulty. The idea was completely foreign to me to oppose any "platform" whatever to the work of the Central Committee of the party in the solution of these problems. To all those comrades who were present at the meetings of the Politburo, the Central Committee, the Soviet of Labour and Defence, or the Revolutionary Military Soviet, this assertion needs no proof. The debated questions decided by the Thirteenth Congress were raised again in this recent discussion not only out of connection with my work, but, so far as I can judge at present, out of connection with the practical problems of party policy.

5. Inasmuch as the introduction to my book "1917" constitutes the formal motive of the last discussion, I consider it necessary first of all to deny the accusation that I printed my book as though behind the back of the Central Committee. As a matter of fact the book was printed (during my convalescence in the Caucasus) under exactly the same conditions as all other books of mine or of other members of the Central Committee, or members of the party in general. Naturally, it is the affair of the Central Committee to establish various forms of control over the party publications; but I in no direction, and in no degree, violated those forms of control which have been so far established, and I had, it goes without saying, no motive for such a violation.

6. The introduction, "Lessons of October," represents a further development of thoughts expressed by me lately more than once, and especially in the past year. I will here name merely the following articles and speeches. [Follows a list of six speeches and articles.]

All the enumerated utterances, evoked by the defeat of the German revolution in the autumn of 1923, were printed in *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, and other publications. Not one member of the Central Committee, much less of the Politburo, once indicated to me the incorrectness of these works. Likewise, the editorial board of *Pravda* not only did not affix footnotes to my speeches, but not once made the slightest attempt to indicate to me that they did not agree with them in this or that point.

It stands to reason that I did not regard my analysis of October in connection with events in Germany as a "platform." I never entertained the thought that this work might be understood by anybody whatever as a platform, which it was not, and could not be.

7. Inasmuch as certain others of my books have been dragged into the circle of accusations, and among them those which have gone through a series of editions, I consider it necessary to state that not only the Politburo as a whole never indicated to me that this or that article or book of mine might be interpreted as a "revision" of Leninism, but no single member of the Politburo ever did so. In particular, this relates to the book, "1905," which appeared during the life of Vladimir Ilyich, went through a series of editions, was warmly recommended by the party press, was translated by the Communist International into foreign languages, and now constitutes *the chief material of the indictment against me for revising Leninism*.

8. In setting forth these considerations, I pursue, as I have said already, a single purpose: to assist the session in deciding the question which stands as the first point in its agenda.

As far as concerns the statement often repeated in the course of the discussion, that I aim at some "special position" in the party, do not submit to discipline, decline this or that work assigned to me by the Central Committee, etc., etc., etc.—without permitting myself to evaluate those assertions, I will simply categorically announce: I am ready to fulfil any

work whatever assigned to me by the Central Committee, in whatever position, or without any position, and, it goes without saying, under any conditions whatever of party control.

It is unnecessary to demonstrate that, after the recent discussion, the interests of the work demand that I be freed immediately from my duties as president of the Revolutionary Military Soviet.

In conclusion I think it is necessary to add that I remained in Moscow until the session in order, in case it was desired, to answer this or that question or give any necessary explanations.

L. Trotsky.

Kremlin

*January 15th, 1925.*

Eastman, *Since Lenin Died*: 155-56. First published in *Pravda*, 20 January 1925 and *Izvestiia*, 19 January 1925.



#### TROTSKY'S DISMISSAL FROM HIS MILITARY POSITIONS

17 January 1925

*Trotsky's letter of 15 January (above) with its combination of defense of his actions and offer to give up his key government post as head of the military, gave his opponents their opportunity to move against him. There was disagreement over what punishment should be handed out. Some, such as Zinoviev, apparently wanted to oust him from the Party entirely, while others advocated his removal from the Politburo or Central Committee. The majority, including Stalin, rejected this and the reprimand was limited to threatening removal from the Politburo and the Central Committee if he continued his previous course. His offer to resign his military positions was accepted by the Party's Central Committee, including a detailed accounting of Trotsky's past errors and why he could no longer serve as an appropriate model for segments of the Party and people (this document). The formality of state authority was observed when on 26 January the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee formally announced that it had approved "the request of Com[rade] Trotsky, Lev Davidovich, about freeing him from his duties as People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs of the USSR and as Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the USSR (Pravda, 31 January 1925). He thus lost his only significant government power base at the same time that his party base had been severely weakened. Notable also in this document is the careful spelling out of the history of Trotsky's disagreements with Lenin and the Bolshevik Party—such an accounting was central to the argument against him at this time, and later.*

#### RESOLUTION

On the action of Comrade Trotsky passed at the Joint Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (two against) and the Central Control Commission (one abstained from voting).

The fundamental basis of all the successes of the Bolshevik Party has always been the steel-like unity and iron discipline, the genuine unanimity of views on the basis of Leninism. Comrade Trotsky's unceasing attacks against Bolshevism confronts the Party with the necessity either to abandon this fundamental condition or once and for all to put an end to these attacks.

On an international scale, Comrade Trotsky's attacks against the Party are regarded by the bourgeoisie and the Social Democrats as a precursor of a split in the Russian Communist Party and therefore of the collapse of the proletarian dictatorship generally. It is from this partly that international imperialism draws its practical conclusions with regard to the USSR, in spite of the fact that the objective position of the USSR is stronger now than it has ever been before.

Within the country, Comrade Trotsky's opposition is regarded by all anti-Soviet and wavering elements as a signal to combine against the policy of the Party for the purpose of influencing the regime of the proletarian dictatorship towards making concessions to bourgeois democracy.

The anti-proletarian elements in the state apparatus are striving to "emancipate" themselves from party guidance and see in Comrade Trotsky's fight against the Central Committee of the Party their hope. The dictatorship of the proletariat and particularly one of the most important teachings of Comrade Lenin concerning the necessity of transforming the whole of the state apparatus in the spirit of a workers' and peasants' government, is being threatened by enormous damage.

In the Party and around the Party, Comrade Trotsky's opposition has made his name the banner around which are rallying all the non-Bolshevik, non-Communist, anti-proletarian deviations and groupings.

In the most general form Comrade Trotsky's actions against the Party as a whole can now be described as an attempt to convert the ideology of the Russian Communist Party into a sort of "modernized" (by Comrade Trotsky) "Bolshevism" *without Leninism*. This is *not* Bolshevism. This is a *revision* of Bolshevism. This is *an attempt to substitute Leninism by Trotskyism*, i.e. an attempt to substitute for the Leninist theory and tactics of international proletarian revolution that variety of Menshevism which the old Trotskyism represented and which is represented today by the resurrected "modern" Trotskyism. Essentially, modern Trotskyism is a counterfeit of Communism approaching the "European" model of pseudo-Marxism, i.e. in the last resort to "European" social democracy.

During the course of the few years that Comrade Trotsky has been in the Russian Communist Party, our Party has had to conduct against him four discussions on a national scale, not including less important controversies on extremely important questions.

The first discussion was that over the Brest Peace. Comrade Trotsky failed to understand that the peasantry did not wish to fight any more, and he conducted a policy which nearly cost the Revolution its head. It required the threat on the part of Comrade Lenin to leave the Government, it required an intense struggle at the Seventh Congress of the Party to rectify the error and secure—although on worse terms—the Brest "respite."

The second discussion was the *trade unions*. As a matter of fact, this was a discussion concerning the *attitude towards the peasantry* raised against War Communism, concerning the attitude towards the non-party masses of the workers and generally concerning the Party's approach to the masses in the period when the Civil War had come to an end. An acute controversy over the whole country, an intense campaign conducted by the whole nucleus of the Party, headed by Comrade Lenin against the "feverish heights" of Trotskyism were required in order to save the Party from mistakes which threatened all the gains of the Revolution.

The *third* discussion was over the "party apparatus," over the alleged "inclination towards the peasantry" on the part of the Central Committee, over "the conflict between two generations," etc. As a matter of fact, this too was a question of the *economic* alliance between the proletariat and the *peasantry*; the question of the policy of prices, of currency reform, of the necessity for steering the policy of the Party by the *workers'* compass, of maintaining the leadership of the Party in the economic and state apparatus, concerning the fight against "freedom" to form factions and groupings within the Party, the maintenance of the leadership in the hands of the Bolshevik cadres of the Party, in a word, of keeping

to the Leninist policy of the Party in the period of NEP. In this discussion, Comrade Trotsky became the mouthpiece of petty bourgeois deviations. Again he urged the Party to adopt the policy which might have led to the collapse of the Revolution, for this policy would have crushed the economic successes of the Party in their embryo.

The petty bourgeois opposition, headed by Comrade Trotsky, forced themselves into a position, in which, refusing to admit their radical errors, they were compelled to adopt the attitude of "the worst the better," i.e. to stake their case on the *failure* of the Party and of the Soviet Government.

It was necessary to put up an intense fight to resist this petty bourgeois attack upon the fortress of Bolshevism. It is now clear to all that the Trotskyist talk of the "ruin of the country" in the autumn of 1923, was merely an expression of petty bourgeois fear, of lack of confidence in the forces of our Revolution, and complete failure to understand our economics. The reform of the currency, in opposition to which, Comrade Trotsky proposed his "plan" and the failure of which was prophesied, restored the economic position and proved a tremendous step forward on the road towards the economic revival of the country. Industry is reviving in spite of the bad harvest in 1924. The economic conditions of the workers are improving. The Party emerged from the trial, stronger than ever. The Lenin enrolment strengthened the Party by infusing fresh proletarian forces into it. But had not the Bolshevik Party so sharply and unanimously resisted the semi-Menshevik relapse of Comrade Trotsky, the genuine dangers for the country, for the working class and for our Party would indeed be innumerable.

All the actions of Comrade Trotsky against the general party policy from 1918 to 1924 ultimately had their source in the semi-Menshevik failure to understand the role of the proletariat in relations to the non-proletarian and semi-proletarian sections of the working class, in minimising the role of the Party in the Revolution and in socialist construction, and the failure to understand that the Bolshevik Party can fulfil its historic mission only if it is really unanimous in opinions and monolithic in character.

The *Fourth* and present discussion still more revealed the serious and all-embracing differences between Comrade Trotsky and the Bolshevik Party. The matter now stands clearly as two fundamentally opposite systems of politics and tactics. In the present discussion, Comrade Trotsky commenced a direct attack upon the basis of Bolshevik philosophy. Comrade Trotsky 1) completely denies the doctrine of the driving forces of the Russian Revolution outlined by Comrade Lenin in 1904 and upon which has been based the tactics of Bolshevism in the course of three Russian revolutions; 2) puts forward against the Bolshevik estimation of the driving forces of the Russian Revolution and against the Leninist doctrine of the world proletarian revolution his old "theory of permanent revolution," which was utterly discredited in three Russian revolutions (and also in Poland and in Germany) and was described by Comrade Lenin more than once as an eclectic attempt to combine petty bourgeois Menshevik opportunism with "left" phrases and as an attempt to leap over the peasantry; 3) tries to convince the Party that before Bolshevism adopted the path of the dictatorship of the proletariat, it was obliged "intellectually to re-arm itself," i.e. it was obliged to abandon Leninism and adopt Trotskyism; 4) advocates the theory of "bisecting" Bolshevism, viz. a) Bolshevism prior to the October Revolution of 1917, which is alleged to be of secondary importance and; b) Bolshevism, commencing from October 1917, which it is alleged, had to grow into Trotskyism before it could fulfil its historic mission; 5) "interprets" the history of October in such a manner that the role of the Bolshevik Party disappears altogether and first place is taken by the personality of Comrade Trotsky himself, according to the formula of "the hero in the crowd," and his version of the "peaceful revolt" which is alleged to have taken place on the 10th of October 1917 had nothing in common with the Bolshevik views concerning armed uprising; 6) describes the role of Comrade Lenin in the October Revolution very ambiguously. Lenin is made to appear as if advocating the seizure of power by conspiratorial methods behind the back of



the Soviets, and that the practical proposals made by Comrade Lenin arose from his failure to understand the conditions prevailing; 7) radically distorts the relations between Comrade Lenin and the Central Committee of the Party and represents them as an unceasing war between two "powers." Comrade Trotsky endeavours to convince his readers of the truth of his "version" by publishing (without the consent of the Central Committee) extracts from certain documents presented in a false light and in a connection distorting the truth; 8) describes the role of the whole of the Central Committee which led the revolt in such a light as to sow the most profound distrust towards the kernel of the present party staff; 9) distorts the most important episodes of the Revolution in the period between February and October 1917 (the April and June demonstrations, the July days, the preliminary parliament, etc.); 10) distorts the tactics to throw the responsibility for the failures in Germany, Bulgaria, etc. upon the kernel of the ECCI, thus sowing distrust towards the Central Committee of the RCP and the ECCI.

Thus the differences that divide Comrade Trotsky from the Bolshevik Party from year to year and lately from month to month, increase. These differences concern not only questions of the past; the past is being "reviewed" in order to "prepare" a platform for the present real political difficulties. The retrospective exposure of the "right wing" in the old Bolshevik Party is necessary for Comrade Trotsky to use as a screen under cover of which to win for himself the right to form a genuine right wing in the Russian Communist Party now, in the epoch of NEP and the delay of the world revolution, when petty-bourgeois danger, favorable for the formation of a right wing in the Russian Communist Party and the Comintern, are in evidence.

The "revision" of Leninism on the question of the driving forces of the revolution, i.e. principally the question of the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry, is the "justification" of Comrade Trotsky's non-Bolshevik views concerning the present policy of the Party with regard to the peasantry. The incorrect anti-Leninist estimation of the role of the peasantry in the Revolution made by Comrade Trotsky, is the subject to which the discussion between the Party and Comrade Trotsky brings us back again and again. Mistakes on this question become particularly dangerous at this time when the Party, carrying out the slogan of "face the village," is working intensely to strengthen the ties between the city industry and the peasant agriculture, to enlist the broad masses of the peasantry into the work of Soviet administration, to revive the Soviets, etc. and when the future success or failure of the Revolution is being determined precisely by the correct or incorrect relations between the proletariat and the peasantry.

On fundamental questions of international politics (the role of racism and social democracy, the role of America in Europe, the length and character of the "democratic-pacifist" era, in the estimation of which his views in many ways coincided with the social democratic "centre," etc.), Comrade Trotsky occupied a different position from that of the Russian Communist Party and the whole of the Comintern without troubling, first of all, to explain his point of view to the Central Committee or to the ECCI. The delegation of the Russian Communist Party and the Fifth Congress of the Comintern, in complete agreement with the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, proposed to Comrade Trotsky that he explain his views on international questions to the Congress of the Communist International. Comrade Trotsky refused to do this at the Congress, but considered it expedient to do so a little while after at a gathering of veterinary surgeons over the heads of the Comintern and the RCP. In recent times, there has not been a single important question upon which Comrade Trotsky has acted with the Party, but more frequently has acted against the views of the Party.

The Party is confronted by a most important and immediate political task, viz. to take a determined course towards overcoming the elements dividing the town from the country, i.e. to take up in its full scope the question of further lowering prices on manufactures to create conditions for a real revival in agriculture (land re-distribution and land

utilisation), to devote concentrated attention upon developing agricultural cooperations (genuine voluntary membership, election of officers, credit), bring up and solve the question of easing the burden of taxation for the peasantry and reforming the system of taxation, and also to exert all the efforts of the Party towards the solution of the question of improving political conditions in the villages (proper conduct of elections, enlisting non-party peasants, etc.).

This policy alone, in the main outlined by Comrade Lenin, can lead to the real consolidation of state industry, secure further development and lead to the growth and concentration of the social power of the industrial proletariat, i.e. not in mere words, but in fact, to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat under the existence of the NEP.

The primary condition enabling this policy to be carried out is the absolute maintenance of the leading role of our Party in state and economic organs, and genuine unity of the Party on the basis of Leninism.

It is precisely this decisive (in the present circumstances) relation between the Party, the working class and the peasantry that Comrade Trotsky fails to understand.

This situation inevitably led to all the non-Bolshevik and anti-Bolshevik elements in the country and outside of the country placing their *own* construction upon the position taken up by Comrade Trotsky and to their supporting Comrade Trotsky precisely because he was being condemned by the RCP and the Comintern. A party leading the dictatorship of the proletariat in circumstances in which all anti-proletarian parties and groups are deprived of "liberties" must inevitably make enemies. All these enemies, particularly the well-to-do petty bourgeois, desire to see in the present Comrade Trotsky the individual who could shake the iron dictatorship of the proletariat, split the Party and divert the Soviet government to other lines.

All the leaders of the Second International, the most dangerous lackeys of the bourgeoisie, strive to make use of Comrade Trotsky's intellectual "revolt" against the basis of Leninism in order to discredit Leninism, the Russian Revolution and the Comintern in the eyes of the masses of Europe, and in this way to bind the social democratic workers to the chariot of capitalism. The renegade, Paul Levi, published Comrade Trotsky's "Lessons of October" in German, with his own introduction, and German social democracy has undertaken to spread this book abroad. It is widely advertising it as a book directed against Communism. Souvarine, who was expelled from the Comintern, is trying to cause a split in the French Communist Party by spreading counter-revolutionary lies about the Russian Communist Party. Balabanova, Høglund and other renegades from Communism act in a similar manner. The Italian social fascists of "Avanti," the hirelings of the German bourgeoisie from "Vorwärts," Renaudel and Grumbach of the "Quotidien," etc., etc., all these elements endeavour to associate themselves with Comrade Trotsky, because of his opposition to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party and the ECCI.

The *non-party workers*, who should see in this prominent party worker a model of solidarity for the whole Party, as a matter of fact, for the last few years, have seen Comrade Trotsky shaking the unity of the Party with impunity. Such a situation undermines elementary class discipline without which victorious proletarian dictatorship is impossible.

The *peasantry* should be able to see that on the question of unity between the working class and the peasantry, there is not the slightest hesitation in the Russian Communist Party and that on this question the Party is more united than on any other. But the conduct of Comrade Trotsky causes the peasantry to believe the very opposite, and this important question becomes the subject of all kinds of legends. This represents extreme danger to the workers' and peasants' bloc. It is impossible for our Party to conduct the dictatorship while Comrade Trotsky continues to affront the peasantry.

The *youth*, who formerly saw Comrade Trotsky as one of the greatest leaders of the Party, now see that leader dragging the youth into "a war between generations" on anti-Leninist lines.

*The Red Army* and the Red Fleet, who should see in the leader of the army a model of party discipline and of correct understanding of the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry (our army in the main is a peasant army) is now presented with a spectacle of the very opposite in Comrade Trotsky. Such a situation is pregnant with enormous dangers for the internal state of the army.

*The whole Party* is convinced that in such a state of affairs, there could be no talk of preserving a genuine, Bolshevik, monolithic Russian Communist Party and is coming to the conclusion that our Party would be faced by a tremendous intellectual and organisational danger if it permitted Comrade Trotsky to continue his fight against the Bolshevik Party. The Lenin enrolment which is sincerely striving to imbibe genuine Leninism is becoming convinced that Trotsky is striving to introduce Trotskyism in the place of Leninism and demand that the Party bring this to the light of day.

*The whole Comintern* observes how one of the most prominent members of the Russian Communist Party hampers the work of bolshevising the sections of the Comintern and is in fact rendering intellectual political support to the enemies of Bolshevism in the camp of the Second International.

Under these circumstances the joint Plenum of the Central Committee and of the Central Control Committee is of the opinion that to leave things in a situation where the Party decides on one thing and Comrade Trotsky continues to act against the Party would mean the beginning of the abandonment of the Bolshevik character of the Party and the beginning of its collapse. With the controversy over Trotskyism is closely connected the question as to what does the Russian Communist Party represent in 1925—a Bolshevik Party hewn out of a single piece and standing on the last foundation of Leninism, or a Party in which semi-Menshevik views may become a “legitimate” shade of view.

Having read Comrade Trotsky’s declaration to the Central Committee, dated the 15th of January, 1925, the Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Committee notes Comrade Trotsky’s readiness to carry out any work entrusted to him by the Party, under the control of the Party and declares that Comrade Trotsky has not uttered a single word in his declaration indicating that he recognises his errors, but on the contrary, in fact strives to defend his anti-Bolshevik platform and limits himself merely to formal expressions of loyalty.

Following from what has been said above, and particularly from the fact that in spite of the well known decisions of the Thirteenth Congress Comrade Trotsky is again raising the question of the fundamental alteration of the leadership of the Party and is advocating views which have been categorically condemned by that Congress, the Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Committee.

#### Resolves:

1. Most categorically to warn Comrade Trotsky that membership of a Bolshevik Party demands real and not mere verbal subordination to Party discipline and complete and unreserved abandonment of opposition to Leninism in any form.

2. In view of the fact that leadership of the army is impossible unless this leadership is backed by the authority of the whole Party, that without this support the danger of breaking the iron discipline in the army arises; in view of the fact that the Conference of political workers and the faction of the Revolutionary Military Council of the USSR have already passed resolutions calling for the removal of Comrade Trotsky from army work, and in view of the fact that Comrade Trotsky himself in his declaration to the Central Committee dated 15th of January 1925 admits that “the interests of the cause demands” his speedy release from the duties of the Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council—that Comrade Trotsky’s continued work on the Revolutionary Military Council of the USSR be regarded as impossible.

3. That the question of Comrade Trotsky's work in the future be postponed to the next Party Congress and that Comrade Trotsky be warned that in the event of any fresh attempt on his part to violate or refuse to carry out party decisions, the Central Committee will be compelled, without waiting for the Congress to be convened, to deem it impossible for Comrade Trotsky to continue further on the Politburo and will raise the question at the joint meeting of the Central Committee and the Central Control Committee of removing him from work in the Central Committee.

4. To regard the discussion as closed.

5. To continue and develop the work of the Party in explaining throughout all the ranks of the Party the anti-Bolshevik character of Trotskyism—from 1903 to "Lessons of October"—and instruct the Politburo to convey to all the organs of propaganda (party schools, etc.) proper instructions on this matter and to include in the programs of political instruction an explanation of the petty bourgeois character of Trotskyism, etc.

6. Simultaneously with the explanatory propaganda conducted within the Party and the Young Communist League, etc., it is necessary to explain in a popular manner to the non-party masses of workers and peasants the meaning of the deviations of Trotskyism and reveal its false paths leading to the break-up of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry.

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### STALIN'S SPEECH TO THE PLENUM OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE ON THE ARMY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

19 January 1925

*As Stalin moved to strengthen his power in the Communist Party, he expounded on the imperialist designs of the capitalist countries and the need for the Soviet Union to maintain a strong army and vigilance against all threats. The promotion of a siege mentality was to be a continual theme throughout the remainder of the 1920s and would serve as a mobilizing factor during the period of collectivization and industrialization, and indeed throughout Soviet history. This speech was not published at the time.*

J.V. Stalin

*Speech Delivered at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P (B.)*

I have taken the floor in order strongly to support Comrade Frunze's proposal. I think that we must decide here on three things.

Firstly, we must accept Comrade Frunze's proposal concerning additional assignments—5,000,000 rubles; total of 405,000,000 rubles.

Secondly, we must pass a resolution endorsing Comrade Frunze's appointment to the post of Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council.

Thirdly, we must instruct the Party to render the new Revolutionary Military Council every assistance in the way of providing personnel.

I must say that lately, owing to some increase in the requirements of our economic bodies and to the fact that economic and cultural requirements are growing beyond our present means, a certain liquidationist mood concerning the army has arisen among us.

Some of our comrades say that little by little, keeping the brakes on, we ought to reduce our army to the level of a militia. What they have in mind is not the militia system, but a peace army, the conversion of the army into a simple militia that cannot be prepared for military complications.

I must declare most emphatically that we must resolutely do away with this liquidationist mood.

Why? Because a radical change in the international situation has begun lately. Now pre-conditions are maturing, which foreshadow new complications for us, and we must be ready to meet them. The danger of intervention is again becoming real.

What are those facts?

Firstly, the growth of the colonial movement, and of the liberation movement in general, in the East. India, China, Egypt, the Sudan are important bases for imperialism. There, the colonial movement is growing and will continue to grow. That is bound to turn the ruling strata of the Great Powers against us, against the Soviets, for they know that the seeds that are falling on this fertile soil in the East will mature and germinate. They will certainly germinate.

Second fact: complications are maturing in North Africa, in the region of Morocco and Tunisia. That is causing a new regrouping of forces, new preparations for new military complications between the imperialists. The fact that Spain has suffered defeat in Morocco; that France is stretching out her hands to grab Morocco; that Britain will not tolerate the strengthening of France's position in Morocco; that Italy is trying to take advantage of the new situation to lay her hands on Tunisia and that the other states will not permit her to do so; the fact that Britain and France are vying with each other in their strenuous endeavors to secure influence in the Balkans, in the new states that were formed as a result of the disintegration of Austria-Hungary—all this is reminiscent of the well-known facts in the history of the last war, reminiscent of the facts that preceded the last war. The Albanian events are not accidental; they are a manifestation of the struggle between the Great Powers, each trying to establish its influence on that small area. All this shows that the preparation and regrouping of forces is taking place all over Europe in view of the nascent complications in the Far East and of the new prospects that are opening in North Africa. All this forms the pre-conditions for a new war. And a new war is bound to affect our country.

Third fact: the growth of a revolutionary mood among the workers in Britain. This is a fact of first-rate importance. Britain holds a commanding position in Europe. The incipient split between the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and the Labor Party, and the fissures which have begun to develop within the British Labor Party, go to show that something revolutionary, something new is developing in Britain. This is alarming the ruling strata in Britain. And this is bound to turn them against Soviet Russia, for the keynote of the revival of the movement in Britain is friendship with Russia.

Fourth fact: in view of the pre-conditions of which I have spoken, in view of the fact that the pre-conditions for war are maturing and that war may become inevitable, not tomorrow or the day after, of course, but in a few years' time, and in view of the fact that war is bound to intensify the internal, revolutionary crisis both in the East and in the West—in view of this we are bound to be faced with the question of being prepared for all contingencies. I think that the forces of the revolutionary movement in the West are strong, that they are growing and will continue to grow, and here or there may succeed in kicking out the bourgeoisie. That is so. But it will be very difficult for them to hold out. That is clearly shown by the examples of the border countries, Estonia and Latvia, for instance. The question of our army, of its might and preparedness, will certainly face us as a burning question in the event of complications arising in the countries around us.

That does not mean that in such a situation we must necessarily undertake active operations against somebody or other. That is not so. If anybody shows signs of harboring

such a notion—he is wrong. Our banner is still the banner of *peace*. But if war breaks out we shall not be able to sit with folded arms. We shall have to take action, but we shall be the last to do so. And we shall do so in order to throw the decisive weight in the scales, the *weight* that can turn the scales.

Hence the conclusion: we must be prepared for all contingencies; we must prepare our army, supply it with footwear and clothing, train it, improve its technical equipment, improve chemical defence and aviation, and in general, raise our Red Army to the proper level. The international situation makes this imperative for us.

That is why I think that we must resolutely and irrevocably meet the demands of the war department.

Stalin, *Works*, VII: 11-14



CONVENTION AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION  
BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE U.S.S.R.  
20 January 1925

*The Soviets were anxious to maintain cordial relations with Japan in order to offset any attempts by the British to induce them into an alliance against the Soviet Union. The following treaty was an effort to normalize Japanese-Soviet relations in the hope of averting this threat. It called for the Soviet Union to recognize the Treaty of Portsmouth (1905) and agreed to a revision of the fisheries convention of 1907. The Japanese received oil and coal concessions in North Sakhalin in return for evacuating their troops. This convention settled the outstanding differences between the two countries and placed their relationship on a stable footing.*

Convention of Friendship and Economic Cooperation  
between Japan and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics,  
with Protocols and Exchange of Notes, Declaration and  
Note by Soviet Plenipotentiary and Protocol of Signatures.  
Peking, January 20, 1925.

Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, desiring to promote relations of good neighbourhood and economic co-operation between them, have resolved to conclude a convention embodying basic rules in regulation of such relations, and, to that end, have appointed as their plenipotentiaries, that is to say:  
[Here follow the names.]

Who, having communicated to each other their respective full power, found to be in good and due form, have agreed as follows:

ART. 1. The high contracting parties agree that, with the coming into force of the present convention, diplomatic and consular relations shall be established between them.

2. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agree that the Treaty of Portsmouth of the 5th September, 1905, shall remain in full force.

It is agreed that the treaties, conventions and agreements, other than the said Treaty of Portsmouth, which were concluded between Japan and Russia prior to the 7th November, 1917, shall be re-examined at a conference to be subsequently held between the Governments of the high contracting parties, and are liable to revision or annulment as altered circumstances may require.

3. The Governments of the high contracting parties agree that, upon the coming into force of the present convention, they shall proceed to the revision of the Fishery Convention of 1907, taking into consideration such changes as may have taken place in the general conditions since the conclusion of the said Fishery Convention.

Pending the conclusion of a convention so revised, the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall maintain the practice established in 1924 relating to the lease of fishery lots of Japanese subjects.

4. The Government of the high contracting parties agree that, upon the coming into force of the present convention, they shall proceed to the conclusion of a treaty of commerce and navigation in conformity with the principles hereunder mentioned, and that, pending the conclusion of such a treaty, the general intercourse between the two countries shall be regulated by those principles:—

(1) The subjects or citizens of each of the high contracting parties shall, in accordance with the laws of the country, (a) have full liberty to enter, travel and reside in the territories of the other, and (b) enjoy constant and complete protection for the safety of their lives and property.

(2) Each of the high contracting parties shall, in accordance with the laws of the country, accord in its territories to the subjects or citizens of the other, to the widest possible extent and on condition of reciprocity, the right of private ownership and the liberty to engage in commerce, navigation, industries and other peaceful pursuits.

(3) Without prejudice to the right of each contracting party to regulate by its own laws the system of international trade in that country, it is understood that neither contracting party shall apply in discrimination against the other party any measures of prohibition, restriction or duty which may serve to hamper the growth of intercourse, economic or otherwise, between the two countries, it being the intention of both parties to place the commerce, navigation and industry of each country, as far as possible, on the footing of the most favoured nation.

The Governments of the high contracting parties further agree that they shall enter into negotiations, from time to time as circumstances may require, for the conclusion of special arrangements relative to commerce and navigation to adjust and to promote economic relations between the two countries.

5. The high contracting parties solemnly affirm their desire and intention to live in peace and amity with each other, scrupulously to respect the undoubted right of a State to order its own life within its own jurisdiction in its own way, to refrain and restrain all persons in any governmental service for them, and all organisations in receipt of any financial assistance from them, from any act, overt or covert, liable in any way whatever to endanger the order and security in any part of the territories of Japan or the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

It is further agreed that neither contracting party shall permit the presence in the territories under its jurisdiction (a) of organisations or groups pretending to be the Government for any part of the territories of the other party, or (b) of alien subjects or citizens who may be found to be actually carrying on political activities for such organisations or groups.

6. In the interest of promoting economic relations between the two countries, and taking into consideration the needs of Japan with regard to natural resources, the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is willing to grant to Japanese subjects, companies and associations, concessions for the exploitation of minerals, forests and other natural resources in all the territories of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

7. The present convention shall be ratified.

Such ratification by each of the high contracting parties shall, with as little delay as possible, be communicated, through its diplomatic representative at Peking, to the Government of the other party, and from the date of the later of such communications this convention shall come into full force.

The formal exchange of the ratification shall take place at Peking as soon as possible. In witness whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the present convention in duplicate in the English language, and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at Peking on the 20th day of January, 1925.

(L.S.) KENKICHI YOSHIZAWA.

(L.S.) LEV KARAKHAN.

*Protocol (A)*

JAPAN and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in proceeding this day to the signature of the convention embodying basic rules of the relations between them, have deemed it advisable to regulate certain questions in relation to the said convention, and have, through their respective plenipotentiaries, agreed upon the following stipulations:—

ART. 1. Each of the high contracting parties undertakes to place in the possession of the other party the movable and immovable property belonging to the Embassy and consulates of such other party and actually existing within its own territories.

In case it be found that the land occupied by the former Russian Government at Tokyo is so situated as to cause difficulties to the town planning of Tokyo or to the service of the public purposes the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be willing to consider the proposals which may be made by the Japanese Government looking to the removal of such difficulties.

The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall accord to the Government of Japan all reasonable facilities in the selection of suitable sites and buildings for the Japanese Embassy and consulates to be established in the territories of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

2. It is agreed that all questions of the debts due to the Government or subjects of Japan on account of public loans and Treasury bills issued by the former Russian Governments, to wit, by the Imperial Government of Russia and the Provisional Government which succeeded it, are reserved for adjustment at subsequent negotiations between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; provided that in the adjustment of such questions the Government or subjects of Japan shall not, all other conditions being equal, be placed in any position less favourable than that which the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics may accord to the Government or nationals of any other country on similar questions.

It is also agreed that all questions relating to claims of the Government of either party to the Government of the other, or of the nationals of either party to the Government of the other, are reserved for adjustment at subsequent negotiations between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

3. In view of climatic conditions in Northern Sakhalin preventing the immediate home-ward transportation of Japanese troops now stationed there, these troops shall be completely withdrawn from the said region by the 15th May, 1925.

Such withdrawal shall be commenced as soon as climatic conditions will permit it, and any and all districts in Northern Sakhalin so evacuated by Japanese troops shall immediately thereupon be restored in full sovereignty to the proper authorities of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The details pertaining to the transfer of administration and to the termination of the occupation shall be arranged at Alexandrovsk between the commander of the Japanese occupation army and the representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

4. The high contracting parties mutually declare that there actually exists no treaty or agreement of military alliance nor any other secret agreement which either of them has entered into with any third party and which constitutes an infringement upon, or a menace to, the sovereignty, territorial rights or national safety of the other contracting party.



5. The present protocol is to be considered as ratified with the ratification of the convention embodying basic rules of the relations between Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, signed under the same date.

In witness whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the present protocol in duplicate in the English language, and having affixed thereto their seals.

Done at Peking on the 20th day of January, 1925.

(L.S.) KENKICHI YOSHIZAWA.

(L.S.) LEV KARAKHAN.

### *Protocol (B)*

THE high contracting parties have agreed upon the following as the basis for the concession contracts to be concluded within 5 months from the date of the complete evacuation of Northern Sakhalin by Japanese troops, as provided for in article 3 of protocol (A), signed this day between the plenipotentiaries of Japan and of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:—

ART. 1. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees to grant to Japanese concerns recommended by the Government of Japan the concession for the exploitation of 50 per cent in area of each of the oil-fields in Northern Sakhalin, which are mentioned in the memorandum submitted to the representative of the Union by the Japanese representative on the 29th August, 1924.

For the purpose of determining the area to be leased to the Japanese concerns for such exploitation, each of the said oil-fields shall be divided into checker-board squares of from 15 to 40 dessiatines each, and a number of these squares representing 50 per cent of the whole area shall be allotted to the Japanese, it being understood that the squares to be so leased to the Japanese are, as a rule, to be non-contiguous to one another, but shall include all the wells now being drilled or worked by the Japanese.

With regard to the remaining unleased lots of the oil-fields mentioned in the said memorandum, it is agreed that should the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics decide to offer such lots, wholly or in part, for foreign concession, Japanese concerns shall be afforded equal opportunity in the matter of such concession.

2. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics also agrees to authorise Japanese concerns recommended by the Government of Japan to prospect oil-fields for a period of from 5 to 10 years, on the eastern coast of Northern Sakhalin over an area of 1,000 square versts to be selected within 1 year after the conclusion of the concession contracts, and in case oil-fields shall have been established in consequence of such prospecting by the Japanese, the concessions for the exploitation of 50 per cent in area of the oil-fields so established shall be granted to the Japanese.

3. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees to grant to Japanese concerns recommended by the Government of Japan the concession for the exploitation of coal-fields on the western coast of Northern Sakhalin over a specific area, which shall be determined in the concession contracts.

The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics further agrees to grant to such Japanese concerns the concession regarding coal-fields in the Doue district over a specific area to be determined in the concession contracts.

With regard to the coal-fields outside the specific areas mentioned in the preceding two paragraphs, it is also agreed that should the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics decide to offer them for foreign concession, Japanese concerns shall be afforded equal opportunity in the matter of such concession.

4. The period of the concessions for the exploitation of oil and coal-fields stipulated in the preceding paragraphs shall be from 40 to 50 years.

5. As royalty for the said concessions, the Japanese concessionaires shall make over annually to the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in case of coal-fields,

from 5 to 8 per cent of their gross output; provided that in the case of a gusher the royalty may be raised up to 45 per cent of its gross output. The percentage of output thus to be made over as royalty shall be definitively fixed in the concession contracts, and it may be graduated according to the scale of annual output in a manner to be defined in such contracts.

6. The said Japanese concerns shall be permitted to fell trees needed for purposes of the enterprises and to set up various undertakings with a view to facilitating communication and transportation of materials and products. Details connected therewith shall be arranged in the concession contracts.

7. In consideration of the royalty above mentioned, and taking also into account the disadvantages under which the enterprises are to be placed by reason of the geographical position and other general conditions of the districts affected, it is agreed that the importation and exportation of any articles, materials or products needed for or obtained from such enterprises shall be permitted free of duty, and that the enterprises shall not be subjected to any such taxation or restriction as may, in fact, render their remunerative working impossible.

8. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall accord all reasonable protection and facilities to the said enterprises.

9. Details connected with the foregoing articles shall be arranged in the concession contracts.

The present protocol is to be considered as ratified with the ratification of the convention embodying basic rules of the relations between Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, signed under the same date.

In witness whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the present protocol in duplicate in the English language and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at Peking on the 20th day of January, 1925.

(L.S.) KENKICHI YOSHIKAWA.

(L.S.) LEV KARAKHAN.

#### *Declaration*

In proceeding this day to the signature of the convention embodying basic rules of the relations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Japan, the undersigned plenipotentiary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had the honour to declare that the recognition by his Government of the validity of the Treaty of Portsmouth of the 5th September, 1905, does not in any way signify that the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shares with the former Tsarist Government the political responsibility for the conclusion of the said treaty.

LEV KARAKHAN.

Peking, January 20, 1925.

#### *Exchange of Notes*

(No. 1.)—*The Russian Ambassador at Peking to the Japanese Minister at Peking*

M. le Ministre,

*Peking, January 20, 1925.*

I HAVE the honour on behalf of my Government to declare that the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees that the work which is not being carried on by the Japanese in Northern Sakhalin, both in the oil and the coal-fields, as stated in the memorandum handed to the plenipotentiary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics by the Japanese plenipotentiary on the 29th August, 1924, be continued until the conclusion of the concession contracts to be effected within 5 months from the date of the complete evacuation of Northern Sakhalin by the Japanese troops, provided the following conditions be abided by the Japanese:—

(1) The work must be continued in strict accordance with the date of the said memorandum of the 29th August, 1924, as regards the area, the number of workers and experts employed, the machinery and other conditions provided in the memorandum.

(2) The produce, such as oil and coal, cannot be exported or sold, and may only be applied to the use of the staff and equipment connected with the said work.

(3) The permission granted by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the continuation of the work shall in no way affect the stipulations of the future concession contracts.

(4) The question of operation of the Japanese wireless stations in Northern Sakhalin is reserved for future arrangement, and will be adjusted in a manner consistent with the existing laws of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics prohibiting private and foreign establishment of wireless stations.

I avail, &c.

LEV KARAKHAN.

(No. 2.)—*The Japanese Minister at Peking to the Russian Ambassador at Peking*

M. l'Ambassadeur,

*Peking, January 20, 1925.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the following note from your Excellency under this date:

[Here No. 1 is quoted.]

On behalf of my Government, I have the honour to state that the Japanese Imperial Government agrees entirely with the said note.

I avail, &c.

KENKICHI YOSHIKAWA.

#### *Note*

IN the proceeding this day to the signature of the convention embodying basic rules of the relations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Japan, the undersigned plenipotentiary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has the honour to tender hereby to the Government of Japan an expression of sincere regrets for the Nikolaievsk incident of 1920.

LEV KARAKHAN.

Peking, January 20, 1925.

#### *Protocol of Signature*

KENKICHI YOSHIKAWA, His Imperial Japanese Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to China, and Lev Mikhailovitch Karakhan, Ambassador of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to China, authorised under their respective full powers, found in due and good form, met this day at Peking, and closely examined the following documents:—

1. A convention embodying basic rules of the relations between Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

2. Two protocols.

3. One declaration.

4. One set of notes.

5. One annexed note.

Having agreed upon every term and stipulation contained therein, the plenipotentiaries have officially signed and sealed the respective documents.

The two plenipotentiaries further agreed that there should be apposed to the present protocol the memorandum handed by the Japanese plenipotentiary to the plenipotentiary

of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the 29th August, 1924, and embodying a statement on the conditions of oil and coal-fields worked by the Japanese in Northern Sakhalin.

In faith whereof, the respective plenipotentiaries of the two high contracting parties have signed the present protocol in duplicate, in the English language and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at Peking, this 20th day of January, 1925.

(L.S.) K. YOSHIKAWA.

(L.S.) L. KARAKHAN.

U.K., *British Foreign and State Papers, 1925, Part II*: 894-903.



### STALIN ON LENIN

21 January 1925

*The cult of Lenin's greatness which had begun to develop even before his death was carefully fostered by the Soviet leadership afterward. All of the contestants for power competed in their praise of Lenin. The following brief article, published in Rabochaia gazeta (Workers' Gazette) on the anniversary of Lenin's death, was typical of the genre, and of Stalin's style in particular. "Ilyich" (Il'ich, Ilich) was Lenin's patronymic (middle name), and its use in this manner conveyed a combination of affection, closeness and respect.*

[Stalin on Lenin]

Remember, love and study Ilyich, our teacher, our leader.

Fight and defeat our enemies, home and foreign—in the way that Ilyich taught us.

Build the new society, the new way of life, the new culture—in the way that Ilyich taught us.

Never refuse to do the little things, for from little things are built the big things—that is one of Ilyich's important behests.

Stalin, *Works*, VII: 15.



### STALIN ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION AND THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES

22 March 1925

*There was a duality in Soviet foreign policy during this period. On the one hand, the Soviets sought an accepted place in the concert of powers and thus practiced a traditional style of diplomacy. On the other hand, under the auspices of the Communist International (Comintern), the Soviets sought to foment Communist revolution throughout the world. The*

following article by Stalin showcases the revolutionary rhetoric still expounded within the Party. Stalin also asserted the Soviet Union as the center of the Communist movement and the bulwark against what he described as an increasingly hostile capitalist world. This article was published in Pravda on 22 March 1925.

J.V. Stalin

*The International Situation and the Tasks of the Communist Parties*

Of a number of phenomena of decisive significance in the international situation, the following basic facts should be noted:

1. Undoubtedly, capital has succeeded in extricating itself from the quagmire of the post-war crisis. The stabilization of the currency in a number of capitalist countries, the growth of world trade and the expansion of production in individual countries, the export and investment of capital, especially Anglo-American capital, in Europe and Asia—all this testifies to the successes capital has achieved in its “constructive work.” As is known, that “work” is being conducted under the aegis of the Anglo-American bloc. Of the results of this “work,” the so-called “Dawesation” of Germany, i.e., the transition from the method of military intervention to the method of financial intervention, to the method of financial enslavement of Germany, must be regarded as one of the most important.

2. It is also beyond doubt that in Germany, in the center of Europe, the period of revolutionary upsurge has come to an end. The period of the upsurge of revolution, when the movement seethes, rises and boils over, whereas the Party’s slogans lag behind the movement, when the masses break the bonds of legality, storm the old order and establish their own, new law—that period has now gone by in Germany. The working class movement in Germany has passed from the period of assault to the period of accumulating forces, to the period of forming and training a proletarian army under the banner of communism. It scarcely needs proof that this circumstance is bound to be of great importance. All the more definitely, therefore, must this be said, in order to be able quickly to find our bearings in the new situation and to start the work of preparing the revolution on new lines.

Such are the facts of *positive* significance for the bourgeoisie, for they testify to the strength and successes of capital at the present time.

But alongside these facts there are a number of facts of *negative* significance for capitalism.

1. Undoubtedly, side by side with the strengthening of capitalism, there is a growth of the contradictions between the capitalist groups, a growth of the forces which weaken and disintegrate capitalism. The struggle between Britain and America for oil, for Canada, for markets, etc.; the struggle between the Anglo-American bloc and Japan for Eastern markets; the struggle between Britain and France for influence in Europe; and, lastly, the struggle between enslaved Germany and the dominant Entente—all these are commonly-known facts which indicate that the successes that capital has achieved are transient, that the process of capitalism’s “recovery” contains within itself the germs of its inherent weakness and disintegration.

2. The growth and consolidation of the national-liberation movement in India, China, Egypt, Indonesia, North Africa, etc., which are undermining capitalism’s rear. Since, for its “recovery,” imperialism must enlarge its sphere of influence in the colonies and dependent countries, whereas the struggle of these countries against imperialism is undoubtedly becoming intensified, it is obvious that the successes of imperialism in this sphere cannot be durable.

3. The fight for trade-union unity in Europe and the crisis in the Amsterdam Federation. The fight of the British trade unions for trade-union unity, the support of this fight by the Soviet trade unions, the transformation of the fight for trade-union unity into a fight against the counter-revolutionary leaders of the Amsterdam Federation (Oudegeest, Sassenbach, Jouhaux, and others), who pursue a policy of splitting the trade unions—are all facts which

indicate that the Amsterdam Federation is in a state of profound crisis. And what does the crisis in the Amsterdam Federation mean? It means the instability of bourgeois rule, for the Amsterdam trade-union bureaucracy is a part and a prop of this rule.

4. The economic growth of the Soviet Union. There is no doubt that the stories of the bourgeois hack writers about the Soviets being incapable of organizing industry have been completely refuted. There is no doubt that during the past two years, after intervention and the blockade ceased, the industry of the Soviet Union has revived and gained strength. There is no doubt that the material and cultural conditions of the workers have substantially improved during this short period. There is no doubt that this improvement will continue. All these circumstances are now of decisive importance for revolutionizing the workers in the capitalist countries. I think that the workers of the West have never displayed such interest in Russia as they are doing now. Why? Because rumors are reaching them about the *new way of life* of the Soviet workers in the workers' state called the Soviet Union, and they would like to test the truth of these rumors. The fact that scores and hundreds of workers holding diverse views come from Europe to Russia and peer into every nook and cranny undoubtedly indicates that interest in Russia will grow month by month among the workers of the West. There is no doubt that this pilgrimage to Russia will grow. And when the Western workers become convinced that every step in the development of industry in Russia also means a step in the improvement of the conditions of the workers, and not the deterioration of these conditions, as usually happens in the capitalist countries, they will realize that it is high time for them, the Western workers, to set up workers' states in their own countries. That is why the very existence of the Soviet state is a deadly menace to imperialism. That is why no successes that imperialism achieves can be durable as long as the Soviet state exists and develops.

Such are the facts of *negative* significance for the bourgeoisie, for they testify to the strength and probable successes of the revolutionary movement in the near future.

The conflict between these opposite trends, positive and negative, constitutes the basis and content of the present international situation.

Amidst this conflict of opposites, so-called pacifism arose and wilted before it could bloom, failing to mark either an "era," and "epoch" or a "period." It failed to justify either the hopes of the compromisers or the apprehensions of the counter-revolutionaries.

In this conflict the "renowned" names of Poincare and Hughes, of MacDonald and Herriot, perished.

Which of these trends will gain the upper hand, the positive or the negative?

There can be no doubt that *in time* the trends that are unfavorable for capitalism and favorable for the revolution must triumph, for imperialism is incapable of resolving the contradictions that are corroding it, for it is capable only of alleviating them for a time with the result that they break out again later on and manifest themselves with fresh destructive force. It is also beyond doubt, however, that at the *present* time the positive trends, that are favorable for capitalism, are gaining the upper hand.

That is the specific feature of the present international situation.

As a result we have a sort of lull in Europe and America, "disturbed" by the national revolutionary movement in the colonies and "marred" by the existence, development and growing strength of the Soviet Union.

For the bourgeoisie it means a *respite*, increased exports of capital, increased wealth, increased oppression and exploitation in the colonies, increased pressure on the Soviet Union, the concentration of all the counter-revolutionary forces around Anglo-American capital.

For the proletariat in the capitalist countries it means the opening of a period of accumulating forces, the opening of a period of forming and training the proletarian armies under the banner of communism in the conditions of a system of repression alternating with a system of "liberties."

For the colonies it means an intensification of the struggle against national oppression and exploitation, an intensification of the struggle for liberation from imperialism.

For the Soviet Union it means the exertion of all efforts to develop industry further, to strengthen the country's defensive capacity, to concentrate the revolutionary forces of all countries against imperialism.

Hence the tasks of the Communist Parties:

1. To utilize to the utmost all contradictions in the camp of the bourgeoisie with the object of disintegrating and weakening its forces and of strengthening the positions of the proletariat.

2. To devise concrete forms and methods of drawing the working class in the advanced countries closer to the national revolutionary movement in the colonies and dependent countries with the object of rendering all possible support to this movement against the common enemy, against imperialism.

3. To promote the fight for trade-union unity and to carry it to a successful conclusion, bearing in mind that this is the surest means of winning over the vast working class masses; for it is impossible to win over the vast proletarian masses unless the trade unions are won over; and it is impossible to win over the trade unions unless work is conducted in them and unless the confidence of the masses of the workers is won in the trade unions month by month and year by year. Failing this, it is out of the question even to think of achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat.

4. To devise concrete forms and methods of drawing the working class closer to the small peasantry, who are crushed by the bureaucratic machine of the bourgeois state and by the extortionate prices of the all-powerful trusts, bearing in mind that the struggle to win over the small peasantry is the immediate task of a party that is advancing towards the dictatorship of the proletariat.

5. To support the Soviet regime and to frustrate the interventionist machinations of imperialism against the Soviet Union, bearing in mind that the Soviet Union is the bulwark of the revolutionary movement in all countries, and that to preserve and strengthen the Soviet Union means to accelerate the victory of the working class over the world bourgeoisie.

Stalin, *Works*, VII: 51-57.



## THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON LITERATURE

18 June 1925

*The question of a policy on literature and the arts continued to bedevil the Party. In this resolution it returned to the question, reaffirming certain earlier positions and moving further toward party direction and control. It reaffirmed the general support for efforts to develop worker and peasant writers, but also tolerance for "fellow travellers." The Party specifically refused to bind itself to any one tendency or grouping of writers. However, it reaffirmed its role of general leadership in the arts, and specifically called for a literature "understandable to the millions."*

## PARTY POLICY IN THE SPHERE OF LITERATURE

1. The recent advance in the material well-being of the masses due to the upsurge in people's minds caused by the revolution, the intensification of mass activity, the gigantic

expansion of outlook, etc., cause an enormous growth in cultural demands and needs. In this way we have entered a period of cultural revolution which is the preface to further advance to a communist society.

2. Part of this mass cultural growth is made up of the growth of a new literature—proletarian and peasant in its initial embryonic stages but at the same time unprecedentedly broad and comprehensive in its forms (worker and peasant correspondents, wall newspapers, etc.) and leading to conscious literary and artistic productions.

3. On the other hand, the complexity of the economic process, the simultaneous growth of contradictory and even directly hostile economic forms, the inception and strengthening of a new bourgeoisie caused by this development; the inevitable, although initially not always conscious, craving for this by a part of the old and new intelligentsia; the chemical secretion from out of the depths of society of ever-new ideological agents of this bourgeoisie—all of this must inevitably be felt also on the literary surface of social life.

4. Thus, however curtailed the class struggle may be in our country generally, the literary front is the one place where it does not cease. There is not and cannot be a neutral art in a class society, although the class nature of art generally, and of literature in particular, is expressed in far more variegated forms than, for example, in politics.

5. However, it would be quite incorrect to lose sight of the basic fact of our social life, namely, the fact that the working class has won power, that there exists a proletarian dictatorship in the country.

Although before seizing power the proletarian party fanned the class struggle and followed the line of splitting the whole of society, in the period of proletarian dictatorship the proletarian party is faced with the problem of how to get along with the peasantry and how slowly to refashion it; the problem of how to admit a certain degree of co-operation with the bourgeoisie and how slowly to squeeze it out; the problem of how to place the technical, and any other, intelligentsia at the service of the revolution and how to win it over ideologically from the bourgeoisie.

Thus, although the class struggle is not curtailed, it alters its form, since before seizing power the proletariat is striving to break down the given society while in the period of its dictatorship "peaceful organizational work" comes to the fore.

6. While preserving, strengthening, and continually broadening its leadership, the proletariat must also take a suitable position on a whole series of new sectors of the ideological front. The penetration of dialectical materialism into completely new areas (biology, psychology, natural science generally) has already begun. And sooner or later the conquest of positions in literature must also become a fact.

7. It must be borne in mind, however, that this task is infinitely more complicated than the others which are being resolved by the proletariat since even within the limits of capitalist society the working class could prepare itself for the victorious revolution, train cadres of fighters and leaders, and work out the magnificent weapon of political struggle. But it could not give an ideological analysis of natural scientific or technical questions, nor could it, as a culturally depressed class, create its own literature, its own special artistic form, its own style. Although the proletariat already has in its possession faultless criteria of the socio-political content of any literary production, it does not yet have such definite answers to all questions about artistic form.

8. The above considerations must determine the literary policy of the leading party of the proletariat. The principal questions involved are the following: the relationship between the proletarian and peasant writers, the so-called fellow-travellers [writers who were sympathetic to the party but did not wish to join] and others; the party's policy with respect to the proletarian writers themselves; questions of criticism; questions of the style and form of artistic productions and methods of working out new artistic forms; finally, questions of organization.



9. The relationship among the various writers grouped in terms of their social class or social group content is determined by our overall policy. However, here it must be borne in mind that in literature, leadership belongs to the working class as a whole, with all of its material and ideological resources. Proletarian writers do not yet have hegemony, and the party must help these writers to earn their historic right to this hegemony. Peasant writers must meet with a friendly welcome and must have our unconditional support. The task is one of switching their growing cadres over to the tracks of proletarian ideology and in no sense one of eliminating from their creations the peasant literary and artistic forms which are the very basis of any influence among the peasantry.

10. As regards the "fellow-travellers," the following must be borne in mind: 1) their differentiation; 2) the significance of many of them as skilled "specialists;" 3) the presence of wavering in this stratum of writers. Here the overall directive must be to adopt a tactful and solicitous approach to them, i.e., the sort of approach which would ensure all the conditions for their transfer, as rapidly as possible, to the side of communist ideology. Eliminating the anti-proletarian and anti-revolutionary elements (which are today very insignificant), struggling against the incipient new bourgeois ideology on the part of the fellow-travellers of the *smenovekh* tendency [an allusion to a white emigre publication, *Smena vekhi* (Change of Landmarks), which maintained that the Soviet Union was ceasing to be revolutionary], the party must be tolerant of intermediate ideological forms, patiently helping these inevitably varied forms to live out their lives in increasingly close and comradely co-operation with the cultural forces of communism.

11. With respect to proletarian writers, the party must adopt the following position: in every way helping them to grow and supporting them and their organizations, the party must by all means prevent the appearance in this group of the ruinous phenomenon of communist boasting. Precisely because it sees in them the future ideological leaders of Soviet literature, the party must struggle in every way against a frivolous or neglectful attitude toward the old cultural heritage or toward specialists in belles lettres. Equally deserving of condemnation is the position of belittling the very significance of the struggle for the ideological hegemony of the proletarian writers. Against capitulationism, on the one hand, and against communist boasting on the other—this should be our party's slogan. The party must also struggle against attempts at a purely hothouse "proletarian" literature; a broad treatment of phenomena in all their complexity, refusal to keep to the framework of the factory alone, a literature not of the shop but of a great struggling class which is leading millions of peasants—this should be the framework of the content of a proletarian literature.

12. The above considerations by and large determine the tasks of criticism, which is one of the principle educational instruments available to the party. Without for one instant yielding the positions of communism, without backing away from the proletarian ideology by one iota, disclosing the objective class meaning of various literary productions, communist criticism must struggle mercilessly against counter-revolutionary manifestations in literature, must unmask the *smenovekh* liberals, etc., and at the same time must display the greatest tact, caution, and tolerance of all the literary strata which can and will go along with the proletariat. Communist criticism must cease its customary use of the tone of literary command. This criticism will be of profound educational significance only when it relies on its ideological superiority. Marxist criticism must resolutely rid itself of all pretentious, semi-literate, and self-satisfied communist boastfulness. Marxist criticism must set itself the slogan—"learn," and it must eliminate from its midst all literary garbage and works distinguished only for their "originality."

13. While infallibly bringing to light the social class content of literary tendencies, the party can in no way bind itself to a preference for any particular direction as regards *literary form*. Although giving guidance to literature as a whole, the party can as little support any *one* literary faction (these factions being classified according to their different views about

form and style) as it could by resolutions decide matters relating to the form of the family, even though in general it undoubtedly guides and must guide the building up of a new way of life. Everything makes us assume that a style will be created to match the epoch, but it will be created by other methods, and no resolution of this problem is yet in sight. Any attempts to bind the party in this way to a given phase of the country's cultural development must be rejected.

14. Therefore the party must speak out for free competition among the various groupings and tendencies in this area. Any other decision of this question would be an official bureaucratic pseudo-decision. It would be equally impermissible through a decree or party decision to *legalize a monopoly* in literature and publishing by some group or literary organization. While giving material and moral support to a proletarian and proletarian-peasant literature, helping the fellow-travellers, etc., the party cannot grant a monopoly to any particular group, even to the one with the most proletarian ideological content: this would signify, first of all, the death of proletarian literature.

15. The party must in every way eradicate attempts at home-made and incompetent administrative interference in literature; the party must concern itself with the careful selection of staff in the institutions charged with press matters to ensure a genuinely correct, useful, and tactful guidance of our literature.

16. The party must indicate to all workers in literature the need for a correct delimitation of the function of critic from that of writer. The latter must move the enter of gravity of their work to literary production in the real meaning of the word, using for this the gigantic material offered by contemporary reality. Greater attention must also be devoted to the development of the national literatures of the numerous republics and oblasts of our Union.

The party must emphasize the necessity of creating a literature aimed at the truly mass reader, worker, and peasant; a bolder and more decisive break must be made with aristocratic prejudices in literature; and appropriate form, which is understandable by the *millions*, must be developed using all the technical achievements of the old craft.

*Only when Soviet literature and its future proletarian vanguard have solved this great task will they be able to carry out their cultural-historic mission.*

McNeal/Gregor, II: 247-51.



## CHICHERIN ON EVENTS IN CHINA AND RELATIONS WITH GREAT BRITAIN

1 July 1925

*Anglo-Soviet relations remained troubled throughout this decade. The British repeatedly accused the Soviet Union of intervention in the affairs of other countries in order to foster the spread of Communism. These accusations, though somewhat exaggerated, were not unfounded. The following is the Soviet response to Lord Birkenhead's accusations of Soviet intervention in China. Chicherin disclaims any Soviet responsibility in Chinese affairs and reiterates Soviet support for the right of self-determination. This declaration cloaked the active support the Soviet Union was giving the Kuomintang Party of Chiang Kai-shek, which was trying to overthrow the Chinese Government.*

[Chicherin on Events in China and Relations with Great Britain]

A certain part of the British press, as well as newspapers in other countries, is carrying on a bitter campaign against the Soviet Union in connection with Chinese events.

This campaign received virtually official sanction through a statement made by Lord Birkenhead, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the question of relations between England and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. Lord Birkenhead expressed regret that the British Government did not have an opportunity to take counsel with a united Europe concerning the strange and menacing scourge known under the name of Bolshevism. In this connection he quoted the words of Chamberlain to the effect that the disorders in China are being stirred up by agents of another government. He further intimated that the moment might come when the British Government would ask itself whether it is really helpless when face to face with a government which has diplomatic representation in England and which is none the less endeavoring to disrupt the British Empire by incessant underground activity throughout the world.

As Commissar for Foreign Affairs I cannot pass over in silence this extraordinary declaration by a member of another government, with which the Soviet Union has normal relations. In effect Lord Birkenhead is seeking a rupture of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. His speech is accordingly aggressive in the extreme and amounts to a demand for taking with regard to the Soviet Union an exceedingly hostile step, beyond which there is nothing but war. It is quite apparent that Lord Birkenhead and those with him are seeking a pretext for the commencement of a conflict whose results cannot be foreseen. The statement by Lord Birkenhead is so serious that on my part, as People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, I must call the most earnest attention of all to the grievous consequences which might ensue from the execution of Lord Birkenhead's threat. The world-wide economic and political crisis is already grave enough without this. The general political situation, too, is tense enough without this. Let each one imagine for himself what would be the outcome in the event of a realization of the threat of a diplomatic break between the Soviet Union and England. In this connection I have in view the interests of England herself and, in particular, of the broad English working masses. On the one hand, the growth of unemployment in England is known to all. During the two weeks between May 25 and June 8 the number of unemployed in England increased by 104,000. On June 15 the number of unemployed in England was 228,000 greater than a year before (1,280,000 as against 1,052,000 in June, 1924). The developing industrial crisis in England finds expression in the fact that the size of England's unfavorable trade balance threatens to beat all records. England already faces the prospect of a deficit in her international balance of payments. On the other hand, observe the immense and rapid growth of the Soviet Union's productive forces and foreign trade. The Soviet Union will now place much larger orders in England than heretofore. Such are the circumstances under which Lord Birkenhead demands the discontinuance of relations with the Soviet Union. It is manifest to all what this will mean to the broad working masses of the English people.

Events in China served as a pretext for Lord Birkenhead's enunciation of this demand. A victim of political oppression on the part of the Great Powers, a victim of economic exploitation on the part of capital from more developed countries, a victim of the direct manifestations of ferocity on the part of the representatives of these Powers in China, the Chinese people rose up against this yoke through mass strikes connected with various forms of political demonstration. None other than Senator Borah, one of the most prominent men in American public life, declared in answer to a resolution by the American Chamber of Commerce in Hankow: "There will be no disorders in China if foreigners respect the rights of the Chinese people." But the most extreme section of the British Conservatives, Lord Birkenhead included among them, desiring to maintain the foreign yoke over the Chinese people, are looking for some scapegoat, with an eye to the public opinion of England and its dominions. However, the charges which they are making against the Soviet government are false from start to finish.

In the first place, what interests England in her relations with China, is the development of trade between the two countries. I declare that on our part absolutely nothing has been

undertaken which could harm China's foreign commerce in the least, and, in particular, trade between China and England. On the contrary, the solution of the questions confronting China which is, in my opinion, the best, namely, the creation of a rejuvenated, centralized, democratic China, independent and free of all transgressions upon its sovereign rights, will in the highest degree promote the development of China's commerce with other countries, and, in particular, with England. I do not conceal the fact that the Government and the people of the Soviet Union sympathize with the struggle of the Chinese people for the attainment of this aim, that is, for its complete liberation and independence and for the creation of a centralized democratic system; but sympathy does not signify interference in the domestic affairs of another nation, and the Soviet Government's policy most strictly and studiously avoids anything that might be construed as such intermeddling. Just as gross a falsehood is the assertion that the Soviet Government desires to create and maintain a condition of chaos in China. Exactly the contrary is the case: the Government and the public of the Soviet Union are interested in seeing China create a democratic system which will guarantee the Chinese people an opportunity for peaceful development without any foreign encroachments. It is none other than the imperialist powers which extend aid now to one and now to another general or governor-general, thus prolonging the internecine strife in China and rendering impossible the creation of a democratic order. It is, on the contrary, precisely the Soviet Government which considers that the triumph of democracy in China would be the most helpful and expedient outcome from the viewpoint of China's relations with other nations.

But while the Soviet Government sympathizes with such an outcome, its fundamental principle with respect to China is a full and consistent respect for the sovereign rights of the Chinese people and the sovereignty of China. I regard it as altogether out of the question for the Soviet government to make any attempt whatsoever to play the role of protector with reference to China and to intercede on one side or the other of the forces within China in their internal struggle. The Chinese people are the masters of their own destiny and must be such—this is the Soviet Government's basic principle which the Soviet Government applies without restriction with regard to China just as well as with regard to any other people. The Chinese people have never given Lord Birkenhead a mandate to decide for them how they are to govern themselves. Is China indeed a colony formally, and not an independent country? Has China indeed no government of its own? On what ground does Lord Birkenhead adopt a decision for the Chinese people and the Chinese Government? During the period when patriarchal rule was recognized the father disposed of his children and adopted decisions for them. On what basis does Lord Birkenhead proceed thus with respect to the Chinese people? What would Lord Birkenhead say if a member of another government would attempt to dispose of the fate of England in the same manner? The Chinese people alone have the right to determine their destiny. If they desire to shape their own political or economic relations in one way or another, that is their own business to be decided by their own will.

Now less absurd than the charge brought against us that we are endeavoring to bring about chaos in China, is the other accusation that the Soviet Government or its agents are striving to stir up a movement in China against all foreigners in general. The international program of the party in power in the Soviet Union is a sufficient guarantee that neither the Soviet Government nor its agents will ever make it their aim to incite one people to hatred against all others. On the contrary, the Soviet Union looks in the most sympathetic manner to the development of progressive principles in China, the development of the country's productive forces, and the close fellowship of the Chinese people with all other peoples.

Lord Birkenhead goes further and accuses the Soviet Government of striving to disrupt the British Empire and of supporting everywhere a movement which is a scourge to all humanity. Why does the Honorable Minister forget to say that from the very first moment

that the Soviet Union entered into de facto relations with Great Britain, it was none other than the Soviet Government which continuously and repeatedly proposed to the British Government an examination of all the disputed questions separating us, in order that an agreement might be reached to the mutual interest of the two sides. Last year an agreement was drawn up between the two Governments with regard to several of the most disputed questions between us, and Lord Birkenhead has only his own Government to blame if this attempted settlement came to naught. As a result of the disavowal of this agreement by the present English Ministry, Lord Birkenhead and his followers are trying to ascribe to the Soviet Government certain aggressive intentions in international affairs. The Soviet Government is supposed to be endeavoring to destroy the British Empire. But let Lord Birkenhead remember that not only was the Soviet Government the initiator of every attempt to come to an agreement with England, but also that the efforts to menace the external safety of the Soviet Union proceed precisely from the Great Powers.

The friendly relations which are being created between the Soviet Union and the nations of the East and which are growing firmer day by day, are the result of the practical effect given by the Soviet Government to the principle of national self-determination, which is practised in still larger measure in the Soviet Union itself.

At any rate, we were on the point of concluding an agreement with England, and we were not the ones to tear it up. I have repeatedly declared that the Soviet Government is fully prepared to come to an agreement with any Government for the purpose of strengthening worldwide peace and stabilizing international relations. This is the best refutation of the false and slanderous attacks made upon the Soviet Government in connection with the events in China, which are at present finding their way to a considerable part of the foreign press.

*The Russian Review*, 1 August 1925: 318-320.



# TROTSKY REPUDIATES EASTMAN'S ACCOUNT OF THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN THE SOVIET UNION

1 July 1925

*Forcing defeated party leaders to repudiate their own earlier statements and to denounce those of supporters became a common feature of Soviet politics. One of its earliest prominent examples is Trotsky's denunciation of the accuracy of the material in Max Eastman's Since Lenin Died, published in early 1925. The book contained parts of Trotsky's letters of 1923 criticizing the Party leadership and other documents concerning the power struggle, including one of the first public reports of Lenin's "Testament." Since Eastman was known to be Trotsky's friend, the question naturally arose as to whether Trotsky was behind the publication (apparently not). The Party leaders demanded that Trotsky either publish a condemnation—drawn up by themselves—of Eastman's book or risk a major confrontation. Trotsky, with the advice of other Opposition figures, repudiated documents and accounts he knew were true. Having begun, he would find himself forced to do the same thing again in the future; indeed, in September he had to make a similar repudiation of two French friends who had criticized the French Communist Party along lines similar to his critique of the Russian party.*

[Trotsky]

Soon after my return from Sukhum to Moscow, a telegraphic inquiry from Comrade Jackson, editor of the "Sunday Worker" in London, informed me of the publication of a book "Since Lenin Died," which was used by the bourgeois press in order to attack our Party and the Soviet power. Although my reply to Jackson was published by the press at the time, it will be as well to repeat the first part of it here:

"The book by Eastman which you mention is unknown to me. The bourgeois newspapers quoting the book have not reached me. It need not be said that I categorically repudiate in advance any commentary directed against the Communist Party of Russia."

In the following part of my telegram I protested against the insinuations alleging that I was turning towards bourgeois democracy and towards freedom for trade.

I afterwards received the book in question ("Since Lenin Died") from Comrade Inkipin, Secretary of the Communist Party of Great Britain, who at the same time sent me a letter to the same purport as Comrade Jackson's telegram. I had no intention of reading Eastman's book, much less of reacting to it, being of the opinion that my telegram to Jackson, which was published everywhere by the British and foreign press, fully sufficed. But party comrades who had read the book expressed the opinion that since the author referred to conversations with me, my silence could be regarded as an indirect support of this book directed entirely against our Party. This placed me under the obligation to devote more attention to Eastman's book, and above all to read it carefully through. On the basis of certain episodes in the inner life of our Party, the discussions on the methods of democracy in the Party, and the state regulation of our economy, Eastman arrives at conclusions directed entirely against our Party and likely, if given credence, to discredit the Party as well as the Soviet power.

We shall first deal with a question which is not only of historical importance, but of living actuality at the present moment: the Red Army. Eastman asserts that the Red Army, owing to the change of leadership, has become internally divided, that it has lost its fighting capacity, etc. I do not know where Eastman has gotten all this absurd information. But its absurdity is obvious. At any rate we would not advise the imperialist governments to base their calculations on Eastman's revelations. Besides, he fails to observe that in thus characterising the Red Army he revives the Menshevik legend of the Bonapartist character of our army, its resemblance to a Praetorian guard. For it is plain that an army capable of "splitting" because its leader is changed is neither proletarian nor Communist, but Bonapartist and Praetorian.

In the course of the book the writer quotes a large number of documents, and refers to episodes which he has heard second hand or even from more indirect sources. This little book also contains a considerable number of obviously erroneous and incorrect assertions. We shall only deal with the more important of these.

Eastman asserts in several places that the Central Committee has "concealed" from the Party a large number of documents of extraordinary importance, written by Lenin during the last period of his life. (The documents in question are letters on the national question, the famous "will," etc.) This is a pure slander against the Central Committee of our Party. Eastman's words convey the impression that these letters, which are of an advisory character and deal with the inner party organisation, were intended by Lenin for publication. This is not at all in accordance with the facts.

During the time of his illness Lenin repeatedly addressed letters and proposals to the leading bodies and Congresses of the Party. It must be definitely stated that all these letters and suggestions were invariably delivered to their destination and they were all brought

to the knowledge of the delegates of the 12th and 13th Congresses, and have invariably exercised their influence on the decisions of the Party. If all of these letters have not been published, it is because the author did not intend their publication. Comrade Lenin has not left any "will" the character of his relations to the Party, and the character of the Party itself, exclude the possibility of such a "will." The bourgeois and Menshevik press generally understands under the designation of "will" one of Comrade Lenin's letters (which is so much altered as to be almost illegible) in which he gives the Party some organisational advice. The 13th Party Congress devoted the greatest attention to this and the other letters, and drew the appropriate conclusions. All talk with regard to a concealed or mutilated "will" is nothing but a despicable lie, directed against the real will of Comrade Lenin, and against the interests of the Party created by him.

Eastman's assertion, that the Central Committee was anxious to conceal (that is, not to publish) Comrade Lenin's article on the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, is equally untrue. The different standpoints held on this subject within the Central Committee—if it is possible to speak of a "difference of standpoints" at all in this case—were of a purely secondary significance, dealing solely with the question of whether the publication of Lenin's article should be accompanied by a declaration from the Central Committee or not: a declaration pointing out that there was no occasion to fear a split.

But in this question also a unanimous decision was arrived at in the same session. All the members of the Political Bureau and of the Organisational Bureau of the Central Committee present, signed a letter addressed to the party organisations containing (*inter alia*) the following passage:

"Without entering, in this purely informational letter, into the criticism of the historically possible dangers pointed out at the time by Comrade Lenin in his article, the members of the Political Bureau and of the Organisational Bureau, consider it necessary, in order to avoid all possible misunderstandings, to declare unanimously that there is nothing in the inner activity of the Central Committee to provide occasion to fear the danger of a "split."

Not only is my signature attached to this document along with the others' signatures, but the text itself was drawn up by me (27 January 1923).

In view of the fact that this letter, expressing the unanimous opinion of the Central Committee on Comrade Lenin's proposition with regard to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, also bears the signature of Comrade Kuibyshev, we have here a confutation of Eastman's assertion that Comrade Kuibyshev was placed at the head of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection in "opposition" of Lenin's plan of organisation.

Eastman's assertions that the Central Committee confiscated my pamphlets or articles in 1923 or 1924, or at any other epoch, or by other means have prevented their publication are untrue, and are based on fantastic rumours.

Eastman is again wrong in asserting that Comrade Lenin offered me the post of Chairman to the Council of People's Commissars, and of the Council for Labour and Defence. I heard of this for the first time from Eastman's book.

An attentive perusal of Eastman's book would doubtless give me the opportunity of pointing out a number of other inaccuracies, errors, and misrepresentations. I do not however think that it would be of interest to go further.

The bourgeois press, especially the Menshevik press, makes use of statements of Eastman, quotes from his reminiscences, in order to emphasise his "close relations," his "friendship" with me (as my biographer), and by such indirect means attaching an importance to his conclusions which they have not and cannot have. I must therefore devote a few remarks to this matter.

The character of my real relations to Eastman is perhaps best shown by a business letter, written by me at a time before there was any thought of Eastman's book "Since Lenin Died."

During my stay in Sukhum I received from one of my friends in Moscow, a collaborator in the publication of my books, the manuscript of a book by an American journalist, M. Eastman: "Leo Trotsky, A Youthful Portrait." My collaborator informed me in his accompanying letter that the manuscript, which had been sent to the State Publishing Office by the writer, for the purpose of being published in the Russian language, had made a strange and unusual impression among us on account of its sentimental tone.

In my letter of 3 April 1925 I replied as follows:

"Even without being familiar with the contents of Eastman's manuscript, I am perfectly in agreement with you that the publication of the book is inopportune. Although you have been kind enough to send me the manuscript, I cannot read it. I have absolutely no inclination to do so. I readily believe that it does not suit our taste, especially our Russian and Communist taste.

Eastman has been endeavouring for a long time to convince me that it is very difficult to interest the Americans in Communism, but that it is possible to interest them in the Communists. His arguments have been fairly convincing. For this reason I gave him certain help, of a limited nature. The letter which I sent him shows these limits. I did not know that he had the intention of publishing this book in Russia, or I should probably have advised the State Publishing Office at that time not to publish it. I cannot however prevent Eastman from publishing this book abroad: he is a "free writer;" for a time he has lived in Russia and collected material; at present he is in France, if not in America. I am not sufficiently intimate with him to ask him as a private favour not to publish this book. And such a request would hardly be in place."<sup>1</sup>

I repeat once more that the subject of this letter was a biographical sketch, the description of my youth up to about 1902. But the tone of my letter leaves no room for doubt on the nature of my relations to Eastman, relations which differ in no way from those maintained by me to other foreign Communists or "sympathisers" who have turned to me for help in understanding the October Revolution, our Party and the Soviet state—there can be no question of anything more.

Eastman sneers with vulgar aplomb at my "Quixotism" in my relations to the comrades of the Central Committee, of whom I have spoken in friendly terms even in the midst of the most embittered discussion. Eastman seems to think himself called upon to correct my "error," and he characterises the leading comrades of our Party in a manner which cannot be designated as anything else but calumny.

We see from the above that Eastman has attempted to erect his construction on completely rotten foundations. He seizes upon isolated incidents occurring within our Party in the course of some discussion, in order by means of distorting the meaning of the facts and exaggerating the relations in a ridiculous manner, to slander our Party and undermine the confidence in it.

It seems to me however that the attentive and thoughtful reader will not require to examine the assertions made by Eastman and his documents (which is not possible for all) but that it suffices to ask: "If we assume that the malicious characterisation of our leading Party comrades given by Eastman is only partly correct, how is it possible that this Party should have emerged from long years of illegal struggle, how could it stand at the

<sup>1</sup> On 22 May 1925 I sent the following reply to Eastman's repeated requests:

"I shall do my utmost to assist you by means of certain information. But I cannot agree to read your manuscript, for this would make me responsible not only for the facts, but for the characterisations and estimates as well. This is of course impossible. I am prepared to undertake the responsibility, if only a limited one, for the information on the facts which I send you in reply to your request. For everything else you alone bear the responsibility." This work is concluded up to 1902.



head of masses of millions carried through the greatest revolution of the world, and further the formation of revolutionary parties in other countries?"

There is no sincere worker who will believe in the picture painted by Eastman. It contains within itself its own refutation. Whatever Eastman's intentions may be, this piece of botched work is none the less objectively a tool of counterrevolution, and can solely serve the ends of the incarnate enemies of Communism and of the Revolution.

1 July 1925

L. Trotsky.

*International Press Correspondence*, V, No. 68 (3 September 1925), 1004-1006.



AGREEMENT BETWEEN POLAND AND THE U.S.S.R.  
REGARDING THE SETTLEMENT OF FRONTIER DISPUTES  
3 August 1925

*Relations between Poland and the Soviet Union remained strained after the Soviet-Polish War and continued throughout the inter-war years. The following agreement was an attempt to settle outstanding boundary disputes which had arisen from the conflict and continued to plague their relationship. This agreement, however, failed to alleviate the suspicion and distrust between the two countries and their relationship, which was never cordial, continued to deteriorate in the years leading up to the Second World War.*

*Agreement between Poland and the Union of  
Soviet Socialist Republics Regarding the Settlement  
of Frontier Disputes.—Moscow, August 3, 1925*

The Government of the Polish Republic, of the one part, and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of the other part, being desirous of establishing a simplified procedure for the settlement of frontier disputes of an economic or customary character, have decided to conclude an agreement on that subject and have appointed as their plenipotentiaries:

[Here follow the names.]

Who, after having communicated their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed upon the following provisions:

ART. 1. All minor frontier incidents and disputes likely to arise and also frontier disputes of an economic character shall be settled on the spot by the persons designated in Article 2 of the present agreement.

This category of questions shall include more particularly:

(a) Isolated instances of shots fired on members of the frontier guard and also at the territory of the other party, provided that the aforementioned shots do not result in persons being killed or wounded or cause material loss.

(b) The return to the inhabitants of one party of live-stock belonging to them and kept in the territory of the other party and compensation for any losses which may have occurred.

(c) The return of property stolen from the territory of one party by the inhabitants of the other party and compensation for any losses which may have been sustained.

(d) The unintentional crossing of the frontier by local inhabitants.

(e) The unintentional crossing of the frontier by the local frontier guards.

2. The representatives of the local frontier authorities authorized to investigate and settle frontier incidents and disputes shall be:

(a) In the case of the Polish Republic, the Starostas of the respective frontier districts; and in the case of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the chiefs of the respective frontier detachments of the State Political Department (G.P.U.).

(b) The authorized representatives of the persons mentioned in (a).

The number and place of residence of the authorized representatives referred to in (b) shall be fixed by means of an agreement between the representatives mentioned in (a).

3. Frontier incidents and disputes shall be settled by means of an agreement between the representatives of both parties referred to in Article 2.

The decisions shall be drawn up in two original copies in the official languages of the two parties, and as far as possible in abridged form.

Minor disputes and frontier incidents may by joint agreement between the parties also be settled verbally.

If no agreement can be reached, the questions in dispute shall be referred for decision to the central authorities of both contracting parties (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs).

4. The representatives of each party referred to in Article 2 shall have the right at their own discretion to refer any frontier incident or dispute which arises to their own central authority (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Polish Republic, People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). In such circumstances the representatives of the parties shall merely carry out an investigation of the case in question.

5. The decisions of the representatives shall be binding on both parties.

Decisions concerning the return of persons or the restitution of animals and property shall be final.

Decisions regarding compensation for damage sustained shall become legally valid after their confirmation by the respective central authorities (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs) of the two contracting parties on whose instructions settlement is made.

6. The persons referred to in Article 2 (a) shall, for the settlement of frontier disputes relating to their respective sectors designate points for purposes of crossing and of supervision, at which communications and letters regarding disputes shall be exchanged and the persons, livestock and property retained shall be surrendered.

The persons referred to in Article 2 (a) and their authorized representatives referred to in Article 2 (b) shall, for the purposes of discharging the duties mentioned in Articles 1 and 3, be entitled to cross the frontier in virtue of their personal documents visaed by the corresponding representatives of the other party referred to in Article 2 (a) of the present agreement.

The persons referred to in Article 2 (a) shall furthermore be entitled to issue to inhabitants who have suffered losses short term permits valid for 12 hours for a single crossing of the State frontier for purposes of the settlement of the frontier disputes and incidents referred to in Article 1 of the present agreement.

These permits shall be visaed by the corresponding representatives of the other party.

7. Meetings of the representatives of the two parties for the settlement of frontier incidents and disputes shall take place at points fixed or designated by joint agreement at the request of one of the parties. The reply of the party to which the request is addressed shall be given not later than 7 days from the date of the transmission of the request.

8. The representatives of the parties referred to in Article 2 of the present agreement shall be guaranteed personal immunity during their stay in the territory of the other party. Such persons shall have the right to transport duty free the food-stuffs and articles necessary for carrying on their work (office requisites, etc); such luggage, however, shall not exceed 30 kilograms in weight and shall be subject to customs inspection

Persons crossing the frontier in virtue of Article 6, paragraph 3, of the present agreement shall be entitled to bring with them free of duty provisions to the amount of 5 kilograms.

9. Each party shall be separately responsible for the costs of transport and subsistence of its representatives in the territory of the other party.

Each party shall be bound to assist the representatives of the other party in its territory to secure the necessary means of communication and accommodation while they are carrying out the duties entrusted to them.

10. The date and place of the first meeting of the representatives of the parties referred to in Article 2 (a) of the present agreement, for the organization of the work in their sectors, shall be decided by joint agreement. The first meeting shall, however, take place within one month from the coming into force of the present agreement.

11. The contracting parties undertake to issue for the use of their authorities the necessary instructions relating to the method of executing the present agreement prior to its coming into force.

12. The present agreement shall be ratified by the Governments of both contracting parties. The exchange of the instruments of ratification shall take place within one month from the signature of the present agreement.

The present agreement shall come into force one month from the day on which the instruments of ratification are exchanged as mentioned above.

13. The present agreement shall lapse on the expiry of 3 months from the date of its denunciation by either of the contracting parties.

14. The present agreement has been drawn up in Polish and Russian in two original copies. For the purposes of interpretation both texts shall be regarded as authentic.

In faith whereof the plenipotentiaries of the two contracting parties have signed the present agreement and thereto affixed their seals.

Done and signed at Moscow on the 3rd August 1925

(L.S.) STANISLAW KETRZYNSKI

(L.S.) ARALOW (Aralov—R.W.)

U.K. *British Foreign and State Papers, 1932: 708-710*



## CONTROL FIGURES FOR THE SOVIET ECONOMY, 1925-1926

October 1925

*Economic planning was one of the central and most characteristic features of the Soviet Union, and developing overall plans for the Soviet economy was a major concern from the beginning. This was a new area of economics and it took considerable time to develop the basics. By 1925 Soviet economic planners had made major strides and were able to issue*

"control figures" for economic planning for the coming year. The following article is an analysis of those figures, including an assertion of their importance: "...succeeded for the first time in drawing up beforehand an economic plan including every branch of economics, for a whole year in advance." The tables also show the extent to which Soviet economic production was on the verge of reaching, after the devastations of war, revolution and civil war, the prewar levels of production. This had been achieved to a considerable extent by putting existing economic capacity back into production. Now the problem of creating new capacity and productivity, both industrial and agricultural, became more important and helped fuel not only the interest in planning, but the political-economic debates which were raging at the time.

L. F. Vinov

*The "Control Figures of the Institute for Planned Economics of the Soviet Union for the Next Economic Year*

An important step towards overcoming anarchy is production.

The Institute for Planned Economics of the Soviet Union recently published its "Control figures for the political economy of the economic year 1925/26" (1 October 1925 to 30 September 1926). In this the methodological introduction is followed by a general and detailed survey of the probable economic and financial results of the coming economic year. The Soviet government has succeeded for the first time in drawing up beforehand an economic plan including every branch of economics, for a whole year in advance.

Though we must not over-estimate the significance of the "control figures," and must not by any means regard them as laying down rigid rules for the individual economic authorities, their appearance alone—quite apart from the brilliant prospects which they evidence—forms the beginning of a fresh stage within the "New Economic Policy." It is a piece of work quite unique in the world, and proves that *the structure of Soviet economics already differs from that of capitalist economics*. The authors of the "control figures" themselves point out "the complete lack of precedents, and of works of a similar nature, in the economic literature of the world."

The "control figures" cannot of course represent more than an attempt to comprise in concrete figures the statistics of the driving forces of the whole of our economic life, to draw statistical conclusions from the relations between the various economic factors for a whole year in advance, and thus to help the Soviet government to bring these factors into harmony with each other as rapidly as possible. Both the methods of the compilation and the various statistical results of these control figures are subjected to a many-sided and productive criticism in the Soviet press. It is more than natural that the first attempt at a work of such far-reaching importance cannot be quite perfect or free from errors, but the fact in itself that such an advance calculation, covering every department of economic life, is possible in the Soviet Union, and solely in the Soviet Union, shows that the New Economic Policy does not represent a transition from war communism back to capitalism, but forward to socialism. Herein lies the great importance of the attempt.

*The method of calculation*

The commission has employed the combination of three methods for the calculation of the various figures:

1. The method of dynamic coefficients, as given by the analysis of the actual development of our political economy during the last few years;
2. The method of expert examination of the possible economic and technical results to be obtained during the coming year in the various branches of our political economy;
3. The method of controlled comparison of the results received, both with one another and with the corresponding pre-war data.

The restrictions placed upon development, beside the complete exploitation of the existing technical possibilities, especially in the industries producing paper, starch, and agricultural machinery, are based upon the following factors:

- Capacity of absorption possessed by the market (metal),
- Existence of domestic raw materials (tobacco and wool industry),
- Possibility of import (rubber and leather industry).

Besides these factors, others taken into account are the financial and credit possibilities; the condition and possible development of transport service; the existence of skilled labour; the quantity of draught animals available for agriculture, etc., etc.

Comparisons with prewar levels are made with due consideration for the difference in structure between pre-war and present economics; some critics are however of the opinion that this considerations has not been great enough.

### *Agricultural production*

The material part of the survey, from which we can here only adduce a few of the most important points, begins with an analysis of agricultural production, showing the output of 1924/25, calculated at pre-war prices, to have been 71% of the output of 1913, as follows:

	Millions in prewar rubles		
	1913	1924/25	
Tillage	11,782	8,106	69%
Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting			
Agriculture collectively	<u>1,044</u>	<u>1,044</u>	<u>100%</u>
	12,826	9150	71%

The Institute for Planned Economics calculates upon agricultural production increasing by 26% during the next economic year, so that the probable yield from tillage will be 89% of prewar production, from *forestry, fishing, and hunting*—115%.

Of those branches of agriculture whose output already exceeds the prewar level, special mention must be made of the potato output, which has already attained 116% of the prewar standard, and is calculated at 127% for the coming year.

With reference to the quantities of goods placed upon the market, these represent for agriculture a value of 2,857 million prewar rubles as compared with 4,498 million in 1913, or 64%. Next year the value will be 3,369 million prewar rubles, or 89%.

The ratio of the amount of goods to collective production is thus somewhat lower than before the war, a circumstance partially explicable by the after effects of the enormous reduction in the traffic in goods during the war communism period, and partially by the dividing up of the large landed properties, resulting in a comparatively high increase of consumption among the peasantry itself.

The products of *cattle rearing* will be maintained at approximately the same level during the coming economic year as in the present year, that is, at 80% of prewar production. The mutual relations of the various branches of production pertaining to cattle rearing will however undergo considerable alterations. The previous failures of crops have had the effect of inducing breeders to reduce their livestock, but this year's good crops, enabling the animals to be kept, will probably cause a decline in the production of meat and raw leather; this will however be compensated by the increased output of eggs and milk.

### *Industry*

With regard to the development of industry, we find a general increase of production to the amount of 54% as compared with the previous year. Next year it will increase about 34% as compared with the previous year. This development is unequal in the different

branches of production. While the beginning of our reconstruction work witnessed the rapid development of small and light industries working immediately for the needs of the masses, the last few years have seen great advances in the reconstruction of the large industries.

### *Increase of production*

(the percentual comparison with the production of the previous year):

	1924/25	1925/26
I. State large industry	by 64%	by 48%
II. Medium state industry	by 55%	by 26%
III. Small state undertakings, private enterprises, etc.	by 30%	by 8%

With respect to big industry in particular, this shows the most gratifying development:

Year	In million prewar ruble	Percent as compared with 1913
1913	5,620	100
1923/24	2,570	46
1924/25	3,950	70
1925/26	5,280	94

The ratio of the amount of goods in hand to the output is lower than before the war, in industry as in agriculture. The goods coefficient (the ratio of the amount of goods to the total output), 1913 being taken at 100, is 89 in 1924/25, and 83 in 1925/26. This fact is however explained by the better organized structure of state industry, which renders it possible to replace by administrative distribution a part of the traffic which was carried out by means of the market before the war.

### *Comprehensive table of total production*

	A. Agriculture			% as compared to 1913	
	In million prewar rubles*			1924/25	1925/26
	1913	1924/25	1925/26		
Tillage	11,782	8,106	10,236	69	87
Forestry, Fishing and hunting	1,044	1,044	1,200	100	115
Total agriculture	12,826	9,150	11,436	71	89
B. Industry					
Large undertakings	5,621	3,950	5,280	70	94
Medium and small undertakings	1,390	1,050	1,370	76	94
Total industry	7,011	5,000	6,650	71	95
Total production	19,837	14,150	18,086	71	91

\* It is especially pointed out that in the categories 1924/25 and 1925/26 not the actual gold price, but the prewar price of the amount produced, is stated.

### *Price movement*

The control figure commission, after harmonizing various standpoints, considers a fall in the price index for industrial products by 9%, for agricultural products by 8%, and of the total index by 8.3%, to be probable. The price index is thus as follows:

*Price movement*

	1913	1924/25	1925/26
Agriculture	1,000	1,693	1,565
Industry	1,000	1,905	1,733
Total index	1,000	1,796	1,647
% of agricultural index to total	100	94	95
% of industrial index to total	100	106	105

The "control figures" contain an interesting compilation of the probable price movement for the coming year, drawn up in detail for each month and class of goods. To reprint this would however go beyond the scope of this article.

*Wages*

The question of the development of wages and of the productivity of labor will be dealt with in a special article. It need only be mentioned that in the coming economic year real wages will reach on an average 100% of prewar wages. The struggle to attain and surpass the European and American wage level can then begin. With respect to unemployment, it may be observed that the rapid increase of production has already brought about a shortage of skilled labor.

*Foreign Trade*

Insofar as absolute figures are concerned, foreign trade is still far below its prewar level. This is only natural, since the development of export, especially in agriculture, invariably expresses the stage of production reached the previous year, while the amount of imported goods in the Soviet Union is chiefly made dependent on the amount exported. We may thus say, dynamically speaking, that foreign trade has developed comparatively as rapidly as, or even more rapidly than the other branches of economics. Thus we find in the estimate for the coming economic year that this year's export sum is almost tripled (274%). We append a collective survey of foreign trade:

	In million prewar rubles			In million gold rubles		% to 1913		% to previous year 1925/26 Calculated in	
	1913	1924/25	1925/26	1924/25	1925/26	1924/25	1925/26	prewar rubles	gold rubles
<i>Export:</i>									
Agriculture	927	204	559	354	950	22	60	274	268
Industry	378	66	121	108	150	17	32	183	139
Total	1,305	270	680	462	1,100	21	52	252	236
<i>Import:</i>									
Agriculture	297	145	189	255	475	49	64	130	186
Industry	710	194	329	341	475	27	46	170	139
Total	1,007	339	518	596	950	34	51	153	159

*New investments of capital*

The enormous growth of production has made a greatly extended transport service necessary. It will therefore be necessary to invest a further sum of 347 million gold rubles

for traffic purposes; 236 million to the railways, 136 million for repairing purposes and 100 million for new orders. The People's Commissariat for Transport Service will raise 186 million out of its own resources, 50 million will be debited to the "reconstruction loan."

The following sums will be expended on enlarging industry in the coming economic year (in million gold rubles):

In gold rubles, the value produced is as follows:

	1913	1924/25	1925/26		
For agriculture total	12,826	15,490	17,897		
For industry total:	19,837	25,010	29,417		
The sum total is covered by:					
Branch of Production	Sum total	Sum allotted to new work	Own resources	Industrial funds	State Budget and long term credits
Electrification	80.0	80.0	—	—	80.0
Textile industry	145.0	35.0	76.0	43.0	26.0
Paper industry	42.0	26.0	16.0	15.0	11.0
Chemical industry	42.5	30.5	23.0	5.0	14.5
Sugar industry	51.0	—	25.0	—	26.0
Oil pressing industry	3.5	3.0	1.5	—	2.0
Spirit industry	10.0	—	—	—	10.0
Tobacco industry	2.0	—	2.0	—	—
Wood industry	17.5	11.5	6.5	—	11.0
Naptha industry	116.0	30.0	106.0	10.0	—
Coal industry	41.5	—	12.5	—	29.0
Electro-technical industry	22.5	14.0	3.0	—	19.5
Glass industry	38.0	33.5	4.5	10.5	23.0
Metal industry	182.0	34.0	76.0	—	106.0
Building industry	11.0	6.0	5.0	—	6.0
Sundry	75.0	—	25.0	—	50.0
	879.5*	323.5	382.0	83.5	414.0

\* The Supreme Economic Council raised this sum to 900 million, correspondingly distributed among the various branches of industry.

90 million are to be devoted to increasing the means of circulation.

This compilation shows that the Soviet government is in a position to raise the money required for maintaining and extending production, if only to a modest degree, without the aid of foreign credit. Were the Soviet Union to obtain loans on favorable conditions, this would be of advantage to both parties, but the workers' and peasant's state will not submit to any Dawes Plan, and its economic position is not such that it has any reason to do this.

#### *The building of dwelling houses*

With respect to the provision of housing accommodation, the control figures provide the following program for the next economic year:



*The building of dwelling houses*

	Million gold rubles
For the renovation of entirely dilapidated houses	100
For the renovation of semi-dilapidated houses and the completion of new houses already begun	100
For the construction of new houses to replace buildings unfit for habitation	70
For the building of houses to accomodate the increase of population	<u>105</u>
Total	375

*Money and credit conditions*

## Amount of money in circulation

	In mill. prewar rubles			% to 1913		In mill. gold rubles		% to previous year 1925/26
	1913	1924/25	1925/26	1924/25	1925/26	1924/25	1925/26	
Beginning of economic year	2,041	379	693	19	34	623	1,157	186
End of economic year	<u>2,076</u>	<u>693</u>	<u>1,261</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>1,157</u>	<u>1,973</u>	<u>171</u>
Average	2,058	496	950	24	46	890	1,565	176

When comparing the amount of money in circulation with prewar data it should be taken into account that cash dealings have been comparatively reduced in consequence of the nationalization and intense concentration of industry in this sphere of economic life.

Banking operations show a rapid upward tendency, but will still continue to be well under prewar standards in the coming year, the upward development not having begun until the stabilization of the ruble in 1924. A few figures:

	In mill. prewar rubles			% to 1925	
	Sept. 1913	Sept. 1925	Sept. 1926	1925	1926
Investments and current accounts	4,214	640	1,534	15	36
Credit and bill operations	4,800	1,139	2,428	24	51

  

	In mill. gold rubles		% to 1925
	Sept. 1925	Sept. 1926	1926
Investments and current accounts	1,067	2,400	225
Credit and bill operations	1,900	3,800	200

*State budget*

We must confine ourselves here to a comparison of the ultimate accounts:

	In mill. prewar rubles		% to 1925	
	1913	1924/25	1924/25	1925/26
	2,919	1,392	48	71

  

	In mill. gold rubles		% to 1925
	1924/25	1925/26	1925/26
	2,500	3,400	136

*Process of socialization in the economic life of the Soviet Union*

The closing chapter of the "Control figures" deals with the process of socialization in the economic life of the Soviet Union. The capital value in the hands of the state at the beginning of the economic year 1924/25 (dwelling houses excepted) amounts to at least 11.7 million gold rubles; the value of the co-operative capital amounts to 500 million gold rubles; the total value of the socialized capital thus amounts to 12.2 million gold rubles, while the private—mainly agricultural—undertakings have merely 7.5 millions at their disposal. The capital of the country is thus socialized to the extent of more than 62%.

In detail:

Socialized up to:

Municipal capital with industry and transport	97%
Industry	89%
Big industry alone	90%
Agricultural capital only to the extent of	4%*

\* With the exception of the land itself, which is of course socialized 100%.

The following table shows the gradually increasing pre-poderance of socialized industry in every branch of industrial production:

Year	<i>Gross production:</i>		
	State and cooperative industry	Private undertakings	Total
	mill. gold rubles	mill. gold rubles	mill. gold rubles
1923/24	5,562=76.3%	1,728=23.7%	7.290=100%
1924/25	7,550=79.3%	1,970=20.7%	9.520=100%
1925/25	9,186=79.7%	2,334=20.3%	11.520=100%

A comparison of the industries of the United States shows the degree of concentration attained by the Soviet industry:

	U.S.A.	U.S.S.R. (1925)	U.S.S.R. (1911)
Ration of workers employed in factories with more than 500 workers to the total number of workers	44.3*	68.8	56
Average number of workers employed in one undertaking**	151	239	—

The participation of the state and co-operatives in intermediate trade has increased during the last three years from 49.7% to 76% of the total turnover.

\* With the exception of the land itself, which is of course socialized 100%.

\*\* Manufacturing industry

To this must be added that steam transport service (railways and shipping), as also the bank credit service, are completely socialized.

\*\*\*

The general survey of the prospects of the economics of the Soviet Union thus gained shows that next year *the prewar level will be nearly approached, and that this prewar level has already been overtaken in several branches of industry.* Most important of all is the fact that industry is developing straight along the *road to socialism*, to an ever higher form of nationalization and to an ever higher form of economic organization.

The struggle for the socialization of agriculture is however still in its preliminary stage. We have before us some decades of obstinate struggle for the co-operatives, for the supplying of the poorer peasantry with means of production, and not last, for *the industrialization of agriculture*, this fundamental condition of socialization. But the policy hitherto pursued by the Leninist CP of Russia, whose successes even the comrades of the former "opposition" now acknowledge with enthusiasm, although as recently as two years ago they maintained that this policy was dragging the country to the verge of the abyss, is the best guarantee that the Russian proletariat, closely allied to the peasantry, will make equally victorious progress along this stretch of the road to socialism.

*International Press Correspondence*, V, No. 73 (8 October 1925): 1090-1093.



## THE SOVIET UNION AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

23 November 1925

*Soviet Russia had refused to join the League of Nations—nor was it so invited. This document demonstrates the ongoing Soviet attitude and hostility toward the League. The admission of Germany to the League caused some concern in Soviet Russia, as well as speculation that Soviet Russia might now seek membership. Litvinov was Assistant People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and would later take over the head position.*

### *Press Statement by Litvinov on the Soviet Union and the League of Nations*

23 November 1925

In recent times the press in various parts of the world has begun to spread rumors that the Soviet government is departing from its former position regarding the League of Nations. In some newspapers these rumors have even been the subject of major commentaries, drawing upon passages from articles in the Soviet press and from interviews with Soviet representatives abroad, which have been taken out of context, distorted and interpreted in a rather arbitrary manner. There is no doubt that all these press rumors and commentaries are not accidental. They arise at the same time as the conclusion of the well-known agreement at Locarno and, apparently, are prompted not only by the post-Locarno optimism in political circles of Europe and America, but also by a special desire to facilitate the acceptance of these agreements by those segments of public opinion of various countries among whom these agreements arouse more or less strong doubts in view of the possibility of their use against the USSR. It is possible, with good reason, to think that the claimed change of position by the Soviet Government in regard to the League of Nations and Locarno is deliberately inspired by certain circles in their own interests.

I consider it necessary to clear up these artfully created misinterpretations and to declare emphatically that all these rumors and commentaries do not in any way correspond to the intentions of the Soviet government. We continue to see the League of Nations not as a friendly association of peoples working for the common good, but as masked league of the so-called Great Powers, who have taken upon themselves the right of deciding the fate of weaker nations. The fact that Germany, a defeated and militarily weak country, is now entering it does not change the character of the League, in which a few powers intend only to use Germany as an assistant in carrying out their own plans in general and their hostile designs against the USSR in particular.

The Soviet government, more than any other government, is interested in strengthening peace on the basis of the independence and self-determination of all peoples. It would therefore welcome the creation of an international organization in which and through which each nation could exercise its own national sovereign rights and all nations would be able to settle their differences by peaceful and friendly means. But the Soviet government scarcely sees the currently existing League of Nations as coming close to being such an organization. The League of Nations to this time has not in any way fulfilled those hopes and expectations which its advocates have placed in it. It not only has never defended the rights and security of any small and weak nationality against the coercion and military pressures of the stronger powers, but on the most important question for all mankind, and for us in particular, on the question of disarmament, it has not to this time taken any serious steps.

The League is a cover for the preparation of military actions for the further suppression of small and weak nationalities. To a significant degree it is only a diplomatic bourse, where the stronger powers carry out their business and arrange their mutual accounts behind the backs of and at the expense of the small and weak powers. The USSR, as a government of the laboring masses, cannot take on itself responsibility for the League of Nations, sanctioning thereby the enslavement and exploitation of other peoples. Inspired only by the wish to avoid any kind of situation which might disrupt the general peace and in particular the progress of its great work of internal construction, and following its own policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other peoples, the USSR does not feel even the smallest desire to enter into an organization in which it would be forced to play the role of either the hammer or the anvil. In particular the Soviet government knows that there, in the form of partners or even judges, it would be confronted with governments some of which have not even recognized it and, therefore, do not conceal their hostility toward it. Others there—even among those which have recognized it—also now behave negatively toward it.

You may, therefore, inform the public in your country that all rumors about any kind of change in the position of the Soviet government regarding the League of Nations, and Locarno as well, are without foundation, and that the USSR, like the United States of America, is firmly determined, in the future as in the past, to remain outside such organizations.

Kliuchnikov and Sabanin: III, 1: 334.



#### THE FOURTEENTH PARTY CONGRESS—REPORTS AND DEBATES

18-23 December 1925

*The Fourteenth Party Congress was the stage for the major public airing of the Zinoviev-Kamenev led "Left Opposition" against the newly dominant Stalin-Bukharin leadership. It was also the last party congress to witness such relatively open debate (although earlier power struggles and the delegate selection process had guaranteed an overwhelming majority for the Stalin-Bukharin leadership). Stalin gave the key "Political Report of the Central Committee" for the first time; the speech lasted five hours. Zinoviev insisted upon giving an unprecedented "co-report," which was in effect the opposition's political statement. Both Stalin's and Zinoviev's reports, and the various other speeches, discussed the wide range of issues under*

debate: the Party's attitude and policy toward the peasantry, the nature and continuation of NEP, "state capitalism," socialism in one country, party unity and the rights of minority views to be heard, the international situation and the Comintern, and other issues. The debates turned bitter and were replete with direct and personal attacks upon various leaders (especially opposition figures). In a particularly adroit maneuver Stalin did not directly attack Zinoviev and the opposition in this opening report, but instead noted that a new discussion involving the "Leningrad comrades" had developed inside the Party, that some comrades would discuss it, and that he would respond in his summing up speech. This forced Zinoviev to take full responsibility for starting the debate at the Congress and allowed Bukharin, Stalin's ally, to make the first major attack on Zinoviev and the new "opposition." Other speakers followed suit, although some, especially Kamenev, defended Zinoviev's or other criticisms of the Stalin-led Central Committee's policies. It is ironic in view of later history that Stalin warned that "expulsions are infectious and can go too far," although he did warn that the Party would have unity, with or without Zinoviev and Kamenev. Zinoviev controlled the Leningrad party opposition, and thus throughout the debates references to it were a reference to Zinoviev and the opposition generally. The reports and speeches of the major figures, not to mention the entire debates over several days, are much too lengthy to be reproduced verbatim, even heavily edited. The following account is a special "telegraphic report" sent to International Press Correspondence, whose publication of the debates in this summary form made them available to foreign Communists (and others). Stalin's full report and speeches can be found in English in his Works, Volume VII. Both Stalin's and Zinoviev's reports were reported in Pravda, 23 December 1925. The full account of the Congress is in XIV s"ezd Vsesoiuznoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii(b), 18-31 dekabria 1925 g., Stenograficheskii otchet (Moscow, 1926). See also resolutions of the Congress, following.

## POLITICAL REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Speaker Comrade Stalin

(Special telegraphic report to the *International Press Correspondent*)

Comrade Stalin, in his five hour political report, spoke on behalf of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party as follows:

### The International Situation

Firstly, with regard to the political situation: The decisive factor of the international situation as affecting the Soviet Union is the attainment of a certain provisional equilibrium of forces between our country of socialist construction and the capitalist countries. The capitalist world is no longer powerful enough to suppress the country of the soviets, and the immediate result is a description of peaceful relations between the Soviet Union and the bourgeois world. This is to be attributed to the inner weakness of world capitalism, to the growth of the revolutionary labour movement in general, and to the increasing strength of the Soviet Republics in particular.

### Antagonisms of World Capitalism

The weakness of the capitalist world is due to five antagonisms inevitably inherent in capitalism: 1. The antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the bourgeois countries; 2. The antagonism between imperialism and the emancipation movement in the colonies and dependent countries; 3. The antagonism between the victorious and the vanquished countries; 4. The antagonism between the victorious countries themselves; 5. The antagonism between our Soviet country and the capitalist countries.

With regard to the first of these antagonisms, capitalism is at the present time in a state which we may call a partial and provisional stabilisation, that is, a state in which the chaos

in production and finance is less acute than during the post-war crisis, a state of relative strengthening of the political power of the bourgeoisie.

This may be seen from the statistical material referring to the production of the capitalist countries, which has almost or completely attained the pre-war level. The majority of countries have succeeded in balancing their budgets in one way or another, but with the aid of a terrific increase in the burden of taxation imposed upon the working population. The high tide of revolution which rose during the post-war crisis has ebbed again all over Europe. The question of the seizure of power is not a question of the day at the present time in Europe; we are passing through a period of collecting of proletarian forces, a period of profoundest importance with regard to the creation of new forms for the proletarian movement, especially in the direction of the existence and development of the mass movement under the flag of the fight for trade union unity. This possesses a profound revolutionary importance, and especially in the direction of the creation of a firmly-welded alliance between the labour movement of the West and the labour movement of the Soviet Union, as evidenced, for instance, in the swing to the left of the English labour movement, the decay of Amsterdam [Second International, R.W.], etc. We are living in an epoch of the accumulation of proletarian forces, which is of enormous importance for the revolutionary actions of the future. We are living in a period in which the conquest of the proletarian mass organisations, for instance the trade unions, forms the slogan of the Communist movement.

Special emphasis must be laid on the shifting of the financial power of the capitalist world from Europe to America, which has become the sole country exporting any considerable amount of capital. The provisional stabilisation of European capitalism has been accomplished chiefly with the aid of American capital, at the expense of the financial subjection of Europe by America. Europe is seeking a way of escape in the increase of the burden of taxation, involving a lowered standard of life for the working class. The impending payment of debts and interest will mean increased taxes for most countries, and this again means worsened material conditions for the working people of Europe, and the resultant revolutionisation of the working class. The symptoms of these developments are already observable in England and other European countries.

Even should Europe's economic life regain its pre-war standard, which is not entirely impossible, capitalism will nevertheless never regain its pre-war stability, for Europe has bought its provisional stabilisation at the price of financial subjection to America, that is, with the imposition of higher taxation in the countries of Europe. The number of leading exploiter states has been reduced to a minimum, and is now limited to America and, to a certain extent, to her accomplice England. The European countries have not yet sunk to the level of colonies, but they have fallen into the utmost financial dependence on America. This is one of the main causes of the uncertainty of the present stabilisation of European capitalism.

With regard to the second category of capitalist antagonisms, here the decisive factor is the development of industry and of the proletariat in the colonial countries, especially since the war, growth of the national revolutionary movement, and the general crisis in the world dominance of capitalism. The Great Powers are faced by the danger of losing their colonial hinterlands. In Morocco, Syria, and China the revolutionary movement is assuming the form of a directly anti-imperialist war, and is endangering capitalist stabilisation. The bourgeois press is only flattering the Bolsheviks when it declares us to be the originators of the colonial war. Unfortunately we are not strong enough to lend direct help to all the colonial countries in their struggle for emancipation. The actual cause of these crises lies in the fact that the countries of Europe, pressed by their debts to America, are intensifying the exploitation of the colonies, and this is bound to lead to the intensification of the crises and the revolutionary movement in the colonies and dependent countries.

It is true that European capitalism has contrived to effect a certain degree of stabilisation with respect to the first category of antagonisms, so that here the seizure of power by the proletariat does not come into question at the moment; but in the colonies the crisis has reached its culminating point, and the expulsion of imperialism is an immediate and burning question in many of the colonies.

The antagonisms between the victorious and the vanquished states are expressed in the new methods of exploiting the defeated countries, in the Dawes system. The effects are to be seen in the worsened economic situation in Germany, in the bankruptcies of industrial undertakings, in the increased unemployment, etc. For the German people the Dawes Plan signifies a twofold pressure: pressure on the part of the German bourgeoisie upon the German proletariat, and pressure on the part of foreign countries upon the whole German people. The further effects of the Dawes Plan in these directions will inevitably lead to a revolutionary explosion in Germany. America would like to secure German's solvency by German exploitation of the Russian markets, but leave has not been asked of the Soviet Union, which is by no means inclined—not even for the sake of German—to be transformed into an agrarian country, but is, on the contrary, aiming at becoming an industrial country. The Dawes Plan stands on feet of clay.

Locarno is the continuation of Versailles; Locarno signifies nothing more nor less than the maintenance of the *status quo ante*, the maintenance of the existing frontiers of Germany in favour of Poland and France. To believe that a stronger Germany would content herself with this is to believe in a miracle. Just as the solution of the Alsace-Lorraine question after the Franco-Prussian War became one of the main causes of the imperialist war, in the same way Versailles and its continuation at Locarno, sanctioning as they do Germany's loss of Upper Silesia and the Danzig corridor, White Russia's loss of Ukrainian Galicia and West Volhynia, Lithuania's loss of Vilna, etc., and thus creating fresh bones of contention, will share the fate of the Franco-Prussian treaty. Just as the Dawes Plan bears within it the seed of the Revolution in Germany, Locarno carries within it the new European war.

Ample historical instances might be adduced in support of the thesis that the peace treaties concluded after European wars have invariably borne within them the elements forming the basis of future wars, and have invariably been accompanied by any amount of pacifist nonsense. After 1871, for instance, Bismarck and France strove for the maintenance of the *status quo*, but Germany's paens in praise of peace did not prevent it from coming to a very peaceful looking agreement with Austria in 1879, actually directed against Russia and France, and in reality the germ and the first preparation for the imperialist war of 1914; this is now universally recognised. France and Russia concluded an equally peaceful treaty in 1898, supplemented in secret by the figures stating the strength of the armies to be put in the field. The further maturing of the existing antagonisms was again veiled behind all sorts of pacific demonstrations, such as the Hague Conference in 1899. And today Locarno is a mustering of forces, not for peace, but for war, and no amount of declarations of love on the part of Briand, Chamberlain, and Stresemann are likely to deceive us on this point.

The Second International, which is most enthusiastically boosting Locarno to the working class as instrument of peace and the League of Nations as the home of the peacemaker, proves by this attitude, and by its attempts to represent the Bolsheviks as destroyers of peace, that the Second International is not only an organisation for the bourgeois corruption of the working class, but is at the same time an organisation for the moral justification of all the injustices contained in the Versailles peace treaty, and further an organisation in aid of the Entente.

With respect to the fourth category of capitalist antagonisms, the antagonisms between the victorious countries, it is important to note that, despite a certain co-operation between

England and America on the basis of the agreement against the annulment of the inter-allied debts, the Anglo-American conflict of interests does not tend to lessen, but rather to become intensified, especially in the world struggle for oil, that main nerve of the economic and military activity of the Great Powers, and the main ground upon which America invariably encounters the resistance of England. This struggle to the death between the American and English oil companies is being carried on all over the world, sometimes openly, sometimes secretly: in South America, in Persia, Roumania, Galicia, etc. Besides this there is a half-concealed struggle going on between England and America in China, where America, pursuing a more elastic policy than that of the brutal English colonial diplomacy, often contrives to place England at a disadvantage.

The Anglo-French antagonisms are not restricted to the Continent, but extend to the colonies. This is confirmed beyond doubt by the reports of the press regarding aid being lent by the English to the anti-French actions in Morocco and Syria. The Japano-American antagonisms in the Pacific Ocean and in China are generally known. And finally, the unceasing piling up of armaments of the victorious states is highly significant, for now these states can no longer make use of the German danger as a pretext, and the armaments are obviously for the Allies themselves. But the Second International, which resembles the League of Nations in doing nothing towards disarmament, pretends not to see this. The Second International and the other pacifists have lent no support whatever to the repeated endeavours towards general disarmament made by the Bolsheviks ever since the Genoa Conference. The peace existing among the victorious states at the present time is not a friendly peace, but precisely such an emphatically armed "peace" as that existing before 1914. This means that the stabilisation which Europe has purchased at the price of serfdom is not a lasting one for, apart from the growing acuteness of the antagonisms between the victorious and the vanquished states, the antagonisms between the victorious states themselves are maturing more rapidly from day to day.

#### The Soviet Union and the Capitalist World

The fifth category of antagonisms embraces those dividing the Soviet Union from the capitalist world. Here it is of basic importance that a world-embracing capitalism no longer exists. The world has split up into two camps: into the camp of imperialism and the camp of anti-imperialism. Two countries, England and America, possess the hegemony in the camp of capitalism. The hegemony in the camp of the anti-imperialists is in the hands of the Soviet Union. Two fundamental and antithetical centres of attraction have been formed: England and America for the bourgeois governments, the Soviet Union for the proletariat of the West and the revolutionaries of the East.

The conflict of interests among the victorious states, in respect of the colonies, etc., prevents any possibility of unity in the capitalist camp. The stabilisation of this camp is very insecure. Our country has accomplished a sound and firmly established stabilisation in the growth of socialist construction. The revolutionaries of the West and the East are one and all rallying round the Soviet Union. The pilgrimages being made to our country by the revolutionary and socialist elements of the whole world are worthy of being accorded special attention. What is the purpose of these workers' delegations? All our commissariats have rendered their accounts to these delegations. This means that the working class of Europe regards our state as its child. We are responsible to it for our actions. This means that the revolutionary proletariat of Europe will defend us against all interventions. We have gained the confidence of the working class. This is the foundation of the relations between the Soviet state and the world proletariat.

Consequently, the weakness of capitalism increases hourly. Without the support of the worker it cannot wage war against us. We shall exert our utmost endeavours for the strengthening of the contact between our working class and the working class of the West.



What conclusion is to be drawn from the sum of capitalist antagonisms here enumerated? World capitalism is falling deeper and deeper into decay, eaten away from within by its inherent contradictions; on the other hand the world of socialism gains an ever firmer footing. On this basis a provisional equilibrium is being maintained at the present juncture. As a result we experience an era of peaceful relations between the Soviet state and the capitalist states. This era is characterised by two facts: In the first place, America does not want any war in Europe; she wants peaceful work and punctual payment of the interest on capital invested. The second fact is the withdrawal from the capitalist system of a country possessing enormous markets and sources of raw materials. This compels capitalist Europe to restrict its production, and the victory of the October Revolution has thus been the means of shaking European capitalist economies to their foundations. The equilibrium of forces between the camp of socialism and the camp of capitalism affords us the possibility of co-operating to a certain extent with the capitalist world.

A few words upon the number of recognitions of Soviet Russia on the part of the capitalist powers, and on the extension of Soviet Russian foreign trade. The current year will witness a large-scale expansion of commercial relations. This raises the question of payment of debts. Our debts are calculated as follows: prewar debt to Europe 6 million, war debts 7 million, a total of 13 million. As a result of the depreciation of the currency, and when the frontier country debts are deducted, our debt to Western Europe amounts to about 7 million. But our counter claims on account of the intervention amount to 50 million. This the capitalist countries refuse to acknowledge, and here is the greatest stumbling block to negotiations.

The attitude taken by the C.C. in this question remains the same as at the time of the conclusion of the agreement with MacDonald. We cannot cancel the law passed in 1917 on the annulment of the Tsarist debts. We cannot cancel the laws on the expropriation of the expropriators. We stand on, and will continue to stand on the basis of these laws. We may make an exception and pay something to France and England of the Tsarist debts, in order to obtain something. We can satisfy private creditors by means of concessions, if the conditions are acceptable. It was on this footing that we arrived at an agreement with MacDonald. The precondition was the actual annulment of the war debts. It is said that the agreement with MacDonald was annulled by the interference of America, who did not wish to set a precedent created in the annulment of war debts. We continue to maintain our standpoint as shown during our negotiations with MacDonald.

There are two questions of special interest in foreign politics at present: 1. the questions of propaganda; 2. the question of the Communist International. The English Conservatives accuse the Russian Communists of wanting to break up the British Empire. I here declare: We need no special propaganda either in the West or in the East. In every country of the West the workers' delegations are reporting on our life and work. This is the most effective propaganda. The peoples of the East are well aware that our state order is founded on the fraternal co-existence of all nations. Every Chinese, Egyptian, and Hindu knows that our country is the only one ready to help his oppressed nation. We need no other agitation and propaganda in the East. There is only one force which can and will destroy the English world empire. This is the English Conservatives themselves and their policy of force in Egypt, India, and China. The English lords are incapable of any other policy. And this will be their undoing.

A few words on the Comintern: those who accuse the Communist parties of individual terror are either ignorant or are paid traitors. The theory and practice of the Comintern consist in the organisation of the revolutionary mass movement against capitalism. It rejects individual terror, and will continue to reject it.

The Far Eastern question: the forces represented by the revolutionary movement in China are gigantic. China is confronted by the task of uniting into one national state as did

North America, Italy, and Germany in certain periods of their history. We stand for the emancipation of China from the imperialists. Japan too must reckon with the growing power of the national movement in China.

I now pass to the questions concerning our Party in connection with the world situation. The tasks of the Party lie in two spheres: 1. In the sphere of the international revolutionary movement; 2. In the sphere of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. In this first sphere we must work for the firmer establishment of the Communist parties in the West, and for the winning over of the majority of the working masses. This includes an even more energetic struggle on the part of the proletariat of the West for trade union unity. Further, a firm contact must be established between the proletariat of the Soviet Union and the emancipation movement in the oppressed countries. Special attention should be accorded to the development and maintenance of the socialist elements in the Soviet state, the more so as constructive socialist work is of international significance. Our country is the basis of the world revolution.

The tasks of the Party in the sphere of the foreign politics of the Soviet Union are as follows: War against fresh wars, the fight for the maintenance of peace, and the securing of the so-called normal relations with the capitalist countries. The axis upon which our policy revolves is: the idea of peace. This is why we do not enter the League of Nations. Our further task consists in the extension of our commercial relations on the basis afforded by a stronger foreign trade monopoly. In the third place we must redouble our efforts towards a rapprochement to all the countries defeated in the great war. And in the fourth place we must strengthen our contact with the colonial and dependent countries. These are the tasks confronting the Party in the spheres of international relations and the international labour movement.

#### The Inner Situation of the Soviet Union

Now we come to the inner situation of the Soviet Union! The following are the factors determining the development of our economic structure: The capitalist neighbours on all sides, involving a socialist development surrounded by contradictions, with collisions between our economics and those of the capitalist system, not only in our relations abroad but also in the antagonisms between socialist and capitalist elements in Soviet economics. This means that we have to develop our economics along such lines that they do not become an auxiliary of international capitalism, but form an independent economic unit.

There are two fundamental tendencies. In the opinion of those inclining to the first, our country will still remain an agrarian country for a long time and will have to export agricultural products and import industrial ones. This tendency demands the limitation of industry. The present speaker rejects this tendency. The second tendency affirms that we should concentrate our forces on making the country economically independent, secure in its own inner power. This tendency demands a maximum development of industry, consistent with the available means.

Should the Revolution succeed in Germany or France, then we can pass over from our policy of converting the Soviet Union into an independent economic unit, to the policy enabling our country to fall into its proper position in the general socialist development. Until this point is reached the country must be secured from economic subjection by international capitalism.

The second factor influencing our economic development is as follows: in the capitalist countries the errors committed by the separate trusts, syndicates, etc., are corrected by the market by means of crises. But in our case every serious mistake does not mean an individual crisis, but damages our collective economics. Thus we are compelled to proceed very carefully in our economic construction. The work must be carried on systematically. We must work with reserves. The many accidental circumstances, the dependence of the

homemakers on natural forces, the dependence of our foreign trade on the attitude of the West European capitalists, etc., all this demand an accumulation of reserves which shall be ready at hand to stop all leaks.

Five economic groups may be distinguished in the Soviet Union, as follows: 1) undertakings producing and dealing almost exclusively in kind; 2) farming undertakings combined with the production of goods; 3) private capitalism; 4) state capitalism and; 5) socialist industry. In this connection the discussion on state capitalism and state industry must be dealt with. State industry cannot be called state capitalism for state capitalism is an organisation of production in which two classes are represented—the exploited class possessing no means of production, and the exploiting class in possession of the means of production. Every state capitalism is essentially capitalistic. When Lenin analysed state capitalism he directed his main attention to the concessions. The concessions imply: The exploiting capitalist class, temporarily in possession of the means of production, and the proletarian class, exploited by the concession holders. Here we find no element of socialism. The state undertakings cannot however be classed as state capitalist undertakings, for two classes are not represented in these enterprises, but only one class, the working class. The latter is in possession of the means of production and not exposed to exploitation, since everything beyond what is required to pay the wages is utilised for the further development of the industry, and in improving the standard of life of the whole working class.

It may be asserted that this is still not socialism since a certain bureaucracy still exists in the leading organs of our undertakings. This is true, but is not inconsistent with the fact that state industry is a socialist type of production. There are two types of production: the capitalist or state capitalist, in which there are two classes and in which the production is adapted to earning profit for the capitalists, and the other type, free from all exploitation, in which the means of production belong to the working class, and the undertaking is not run for the profit of one class, but aims at extending the industry for the benefit of the working class. Lenin called the state undertakings the consistently socialist type of undertakings. Our state is not a bourgeois state, since the state apparatus does not serve the purpose of oppressing the working class, but the purpose of emancipating this class from the bourgeois yoke. Our state is thus a proletarian state, even though the residue of the old regime has not yet been completely swept away. Lenin was very severe on the Soviet state for adhering to this residue of bureaucracy, but never ceased to emphasise that our state represents a new type, the proletarian state. We must distinguish this actual difference of type from the residue still clinging to the state apparatus. This applies equally to the economic apparatus. This difference in principle must not be forgotten. A mere residue of bureaucracy in the leading organs of the state undertakings is no reason for failing to recognise the essentially socialist character of these undertakings.

#### The Situation and Character of the Economics of the Soviet Union

As compared with 1913, agricultural production has increased to 71%. An increase up to 88% of pre-war production is planned for next year. Industry has yielded the following results: 7 million roubles in 1913, 5 million roubles in 1924/25, amounting to 71% of the pre-war standard. An increase up to 95% of the pre-war standard is planned for next year. Industry has developed more rapidly than agriculture this year.

The electrification is making such rapid strides that, if it continues at the same speed, the whole of the project for the electrification of the Soviet Union will have been realised by 1932. The electrical industry is developing at the same pace, and its programme for 1925/26 is calculated at 170% of the pre-war standard. In 1923/24 the production of state and co-operative industry amounted to 76%, that of private industry to 24%; in 1924/25, on the other hand, the corresponding figures were 79.3% and 20.7%. The specific weight of private industry has declined. The estimates for the coming year give the figures at 80%

for state and co-operative industry, 20% for private industry. Taken absolutely, private industry is on the increase; but since state and co-operative industry is growing even more rapidly, the specific weight of private industry is sinking successively. The end result is: An undoubted ascendancy of socialist industry over private industry.

With regard to the comparative capital in the possession of the state and of private persons, the preponderance is again on the side of the state. Capital to the amount of 11.7% million for state and co-operative industry, compared to 7.5 million for private persons, mainly farmers. This means that the comparative amount of nationalised capital is extremely high. Nevertheless our social order cannot be designated as either capitalist or socialist.

Our present state of society represents a transitional stage form of capitalism to socialism. Reckoned on the basis of the extent of production, the private economic enterprises predominate. But the participation of socialist industry is increasing from day to day. The participation of socialist industry grows steadily, thanks to its concentration and organisation, thanks to the existence of the proletarian dictatorship, thanks to the fact that our transport service, our credit system, and our banks, are in the hands of the state. Our industry is steadily subordinating private industry, and every other form of economics, beneath its influence. The agricultural undertakings are destined to follow in the footsteps of the city and of big industry. These are conclusions which we have to draw with regard to the character of our present order.

The state budget has been raised to four million roubles. When the amount of the municipal budgets is added to this, the sum total amounts to 74.6% as compared with 1913. It is important to note that the revenue from non-taxation sources have been much greater than those from the taxes. Special attention should be accorded to the question of the surplus earnings yielded by our state and co-operative undertakings during the past year. State industry and the associated metal undertakings yielded a surplus of 142 million roubles in 1923/24. Of this 41 million fell to the share of the state treasury. In 1924/25 the surplus yielded by these undertakings amounted to 315 million roubles, of which 173 million, or 54% fell to the state.

State domestic trade yielded 37 million in 1923/24, the share of the state treasury being 14 million. In 1924/25 state domestic trade yielded a profit of only 22 million roubles owing to the price reduction policy; 10 million of this fell to the state treasury. The foreign trade gains for 1925, an amount of 44 million, of which 29 million go to the state. Compared with 1913, we attained 21% of our pre-war foreign trade standard in 1923/24, and 26% in 1924/25.

For last year an adverse trade balance to the amount of 140 million is to be recorded. This question demands serious attention. The Twelfth Party Congress gave express directions for a favourable trade balance. The Soviet organs and the C.C., in failing to carry out these directions, have committed a grave error. The C.C. had already resolved however, in November 1925, that next year's foreign trade balance has to be favourable at least to the amount of 100 million roubles. It is only possible for our payment balance to maintain its equilibrium when our trade balance is favourable, since we are importing no capital from abroad. The maintenance of a stable currency and the further development of our industry and agriculture depend upon this factor.

In the questions of industry and agriculture the facts are the following: the Soviet Union is still an agrarian country. Industry approaches the pre-war standard, and further strides forward signify developments along new technical lines, new equipment, new works. The transition from the policy of the maximum utilisation of every existing industrial possibility to the policy of building up a new industry demands extensive capital. The shortage of capital will prevent industry from continuing to develop at the same rate of speed as hitherto. In agriculture, on the other hand, the existing possibilities are by no means exhausted.

Agriculture can continue to develop with its present rapidity on its present technical basis, and thus the future industrial balance will fail to keep pace with the agricultural balance for some time to come. In the sphere of agriculture there are still inner potential possibilities not yet fully utilised.

Here it is the task of the Party to raise large state industry at all costs, and to aid the Soviet industries of the provincial type. We cannot solve the problem of the development of constructive initiative in the outlying districts, nor the problem of the rapid industrialisation of the country, unless the industrial forces in various regions are encouraged to develop, unless the interests and advantages of the center are made to coincide with the interests and advantages of the provinces. A period of over-production of fuel is now being succeeded by a crisis for want of fuel, industry having developed more rapidly than fuel production. The Soviet Union has almost reached the stage where Russia stood during the bourgeois regime, when fuel was so scarce that it had to be imported. The fuel balance fails to correspond with the industrial balance. It is our task to increase the production of fuel. The techniques of fuel production must be improved; they must be made to keep pace with industrial development. A certain incongruity exists between the metal balance and the balance of our collective economics. When the minimum demand for metal and the maximum possibilities of metal production are compared, there is a shortage of about ten million. This must receive special attention. Metal is the foundation of the industry, and its balance must be made to agree with the balance of industry and transport service. With reference to the lack of agreement between the balance of skilled labour and the industrial balance, the demand for qualified workers in our collective industries amounts to 433,000 workers for the year 1925/26. We are not in a position to meet more than one quarter of these demands.

To pass to the question of trade, the statistical data at our disposal show the supremacy of state trade over private capitalist trade. In 1923/24 domestic trade total amounted to 51% of the pre-war standard, in 1924/25 to 71%. The growth of domestic trade is incontestable. The state participated to the extent of 45% of the total domestic trade in 1923/24, the co-operatives to 19%, private capital 35%. In 1924/25 state participation amounted to 50%, co-operative participation 24.7%, private capital 24.9%. The participation of private capital is sinking, the participation of the state and the co-operatives is increasing. We observe the same tendency when we examine wholesale and retail trade separately. In 1923/24 the state participated to the extent of more than 62% of the total wholesale trade, in 1924/25 68.9%. The participation of the co-operatives rose in this time from 15% to 19%. The participation of private capital has sunk from 21% to 11%. The state participated in retail trade amounted to 16% in 1923/24, and to almost 23% in 1924/25. Co-operative participation increased from 25.9% to 32.9%. Private capitalist participation fell from 57% to 44.3%.

State participation in grain transactions has not grown so rapidly as in last year. This is the result of the mistakes made. Not only did the state organs miscalculate, but also the Party Central Committee, since this is responsible for everything. The miscalculation rose out of the fact that the plan did not take into account the new special conditions ruling the market, the new conditions under which the required quantities of grain were to be procured. This year is the first in which the Soviet state exercised no administrative pressure. The peasants and the representatives of the government have appeared in the market for the first time as equal factors. The agricultural organs intend raising 70% of the projected amount of grain by 1 January 1926. It has not been taken into account that the peasant likes to manoeuvre on his own account, that the peasant holds his wheat back in the hope of higher prices, and that the peasant prefers to place less valuable sorts of grain on the market at present. In this connection the grain plan is to be revised, the grain export plan restricted, and the import plan subjected to corresponding imitations. The new import and export plan will have to close with a favourable balance of a minimum of 100 million.

### Class Relations

The development of the national economy of the country has led to an improvement in the material position, especially among the whole proletariat. The working class is no longer de-classed; the restoration and growth of the working class are proceeding rapidly. This is best illustrated by the following figures: On 1 April 1924 the sum total of workers, including agricultural labourers, amount to 5,500,000 workers, including one million agricultural workers and 760,000 unemployed. By 1 October 1925 the number of workers had risen to 7,000,000, including 1,200,000 agricultural labourers and 715,000 unemployed. This proves the incontestable growth of the working class.

The average monthly wages of the industrial workers expressed in goods roubles, have been as follows: April 1924, 35 roubles or 62% of the pre-war wage; September 1925, 50 roubles or 95% of the pre-war wage has already been exceeded. This increase in wages is accompanied by increased labour productivity.

The total number of socially insured workers amounted to 6,700,000 in 1924/25, and in 1925/26 the number will probably be 7,000,000. Aid was given to the impoverished peasantry to the amount of 105 million roubles in 1924/25, this including relief from taxation, aid in the struggle against the results of the failure of crops in 1924, credit, etc. The state budget provided 71,000,000 for this purpose, besides another 77,000,000 for the fight against the drought. The prerequisites towards an improvement in the material situation of the working class and the peasantry already exist.

The political activity of the workers and peasants has also greatly increased. They have begun to judge critically the errors committed by the state organs. We are entering a period of revival among all classes and groups of society. This revival may be observed as well among the new bourgeois and their agents, the rich farmers and the intelligentsia. It was on this basis that the Fourteenth Party Conference passed its decisions on the activation of the Soviets, on the concessions to the peasants in the sense of solidifying the question of land leases, and wage labour, on the material support to be given to the peasant poor, on the policy of a firm alliance with the middle farmers, and on the liquidation of the last remains of War Communism. All these decisions aimed at regulating conditions in the countryside, at increasing the authority of the proletariat and of the Party, and at securing the firm alliance between the proletariat and the poor and middle peasantry. This policy has been fully justified.

### The Peasant Question

As regards the decision that we should direct our course towards the middle peasants, we must repeat that the Second Congress of the Comintern passed a resolution to the effect that during the period of struggle the sole ally of the proletariat is to be found in the poor peasantry, whilst the most that can be done with of the middle peasants is to neutralise them. This is true. Lenin wrote this resolution for the parties seeking to seize power. But now we are a Party already in the full possession of power. There is a tremendous difference in the peasant question when viewed in this light.

Leninism comprehends three fundamental slogans, each corresponding to one of the three period of revolution. It is of decisive importance to adapt each slogan to its appropriate period.

1. When we were advancing to the bourgeois revolution, Lenin proclaimed: alliance with the whole of the peasantry against the Tsar and the large landowners, neutralisation of the liberal bourgeoisie. With this slogan we won the victory.

2. In the second stage, in October, Lenin issued the new slogan: alliance of the proletariat with the poor peasantry, against the whole bourgeoisie, the middle peasantry being neutralised. This is the slogan for a party about to seize power.

3. In the third stage, after the victory over the attacks of the imperialists, and at the commencement of the work of socialist construction, Lenin gave out the third slogan: a firm alliance of the proletariat and poor peasantry with the middle peasantry. This is the sole correct slogan for the period of far-reaching socialisation, for socialism is not confined to the city only. Socialism is an economic organisation uniting industry and agriculture on the basis of the socialisation of the means of production. Lenin drew attention to this as early as the Eighth Party Congress. Those desirous of revoking this theoretical standpoint by referring to the resolution passed by the Second Congress of the Comintern should state this straightforwardly. Lenin's propositions should not be torn from their context.

In actual practice the position with regard to the peasant question is as follows: after the October Revolution a certain percentage of the poor peasantry acquired the position of middle peasants. At the present time the middle peasants form the majority of the peasantry. The differentiation in the peasantry exists, but is proceeding slowly.

The idea that the poor peasants and the rich peasants have numerically increased, while the middle peasants are greatly on the decrease, is erroneous. Another equally ridiculous idea is that 61% of the grain surplus is in the hands of the rich peasants, the poor peasantry have nothing, while the rest is in the hands of the middle peasants.

The middle peasants thus being in the majority in the peasantry, despite other trends of development, and the constructive and co-operative plans laid down by Lenin demanding that the main masses of the peasantry be induced to co-operate with us, the policy of alliance with the middle peasants, in the NEP, is the sole possible correct line of action. The October plenary session of the Central Committee passed resolutions aiming at the further confirmation of the policy laid down by the Fourteenth Party Conference. It was incumbent upon the October plenary session not to permit the policy of the Fourteenth Party Conference to be disorganised, but to combat the currents which have risen in the Party, according to which the policy of a firm alliance with the middle peasantry is wrong and unacceptable. Some comrades have even asserted that the policy of a firm alliance with the middle peasants signifies disregarding the poor peasantry. This is nonsense. The question of the poor peasantry is not new, and was therefore not raised at the October plenary conference. The question of the poor peasantry was only raised in connection with the activation of the soviets. Soviet democracy signifies the leadership by the working class. Soviet democracy under the leadership of the proletariat signifies that the proletariat must have its representatives in the villages. These are the representatives of the poor peasantry.

In order to liquidate these currents, the Fourteenth Party Conference was set the task of: 1. determining the conditions, means, and extent of the material support to be given to the poor peasantry; 2. issuing the slogan of the organisation of special groups and factions among the poor peasantry, with the object of a political struggle attracting the middle peasantry to us and isolating the rich peasants. Both of these tasks were carried out by Comrade Molotov in co-operation with the Rural Commission of the Central Committee.

The poor peasantry is still permeated with the psychology of War Communism. The result is a certain passivity. We must impress upon the poor peasantry that they must take independent action, that they must, with the help of the Communist Party and the State, organise groups, must work in the soviets, co-operatives, and peasants' committees, must fight against the rich peasantry, not by means of administrative pressure, but by means of political struggle.

Two deviations have arisen in the peasant policy, both of which we must combat: the deviation which underestimates the danger represented by the richer peasantry, and the deviation of overestimating this danger and underestimating the importance of the middle peasantry. The deviation with reference to the over-estimation of the rich peasantry danger would have arisen in any case, since the present line of development tends to a revival of capitalism, bound to bring about a certain degree of confusion in the Party.

But on the other hand, socialist industry is growing, and a struggle is going on between it and private capital. At the present time the socialist elements have already gained the ascendance over private capital. The rich peasantry is however growing all the same. This danger must not be underestimated, for the rich peasant represents an agent of capitalism among the peasantry.

But there is still another deviation: the uncertainty engendered by the danger represented by the rich peasantry, the panic in face of this danger. This uncertainty has even reached such a point that the middle peasantry has been almost forgotten. But our main task among the peasantry at the present time is the fight for capturing the middle peasantry, the fight for the separation of the middle peasantry from the rich peasants, the fight for the isolation of the rich peasantry by means of a firmly established alliance between us and the middle peasantry.

Both of these deviations are rooted in the following factors. The first deviation consists of the underestimation of the importance of the rich peasantry, the capitalist elements in the villages. This deviation arises out of a denial of the differentiation existing among the peasantry; it asserts that the rich peasant is disappearing. This deviation leads to a denial of the class struggle among the peasantry. The second deviation consists of an overestimation of the importance of the rich peasantry, in a state of panic in face of these capitalist elements. This deviation lets loose class warfare among the peasantry, leads to the reclamation of civil war, to the disorganisation of constructive socialisation, to the denial of Lenin's co-operative plans. Both deviations are equally pernicious. Happily, the Party possesses forces enabling both deviations to be nipped in the bud. (Applause.) None the less, the Party must concentrate its full efforts against the second deviation. (Applause.)

### The Next Tasks

The leading tasks of our domestic politics are above all: The increase of the country's production; the transformation of our country from an agrarian country into an industrial one; the securing of the decisive preponderance of the socialist elements in our national economy over the capitalist; security for the necessary economic independence of the Soviet Union in the midst of its capitalist surroundings; increased specific weight of state revenues from sources other than taxation.

In industry and agriculture the following are our tasks: The development of socialist industry by the improvement of the technical apparatus; increased productivity of labour; acceleration of the turnover; equilibration of the raw material and metal balances, and of the ground capital balance. Development of the railway transport service to correspond with the growing needs of industry, increased development of municipal industry. The technical intensification of agricultural production and its industrialisation. The drawing of the scattered farms in the socialist structure by means of mass co-operation and by raising the cultural level of the peasantry.

In the sphere of trade our tasks are as follows: The expansion and qualitative improvement of the system of goods distribution, of co-operation, and of state commerce; the creation of a uniform apparatus and plan for the organs entrusted with the procurement of grain; increased trade in goods with the capitalist countries, a favourable foreign trade balance being ensured, and with this a favourable payment balance securing the stability of the currency and safeguarding against inflation. As an integral part of state planned economics; the accumulation of the necessary reserves.

With regard to class relations, the following are our tasks: we must ensure the alliance between the proletariat and the poor peasantry and the middle peasantry; we must secure the leading role for the proletariat in this alliance. We must aim at the political isolation and economic repression of the village kulaks and of the city capitalists.



In the sphere of the Soviet constructive work an energetic fight must be put up against bureaucracy, and the broad masses of the workers called upon to lend their aid.

A new ideology has taken possession of the bourgeoisie. They talk of an unconscious degeneration among the Bolsheviks, and of a gradual return to the bourgeois republic. It is scarcely necessary to refute this piece of foolishness. Our party cadres are not made of the material likely to succumb to degeneration. They have Lenin's works in their hands, and they learn and understand Leninism. This outcry over degeneration will not alarm anybody. Even the author of this ideology, Ustralov, has to serve us. He may dream about degeneration, but he has to carry our work. Or it will go badly with him. (Applause!)

### Internal Party Questions

In conclusion we must touch upon the questions of the Party. The successes recorded by the proletarian dictatorship would have been impossible if our Party had not faithfully fulfilled its tasks. The proletarian dictatorship cannot exist of itself, but solely by means of the forces of the Party and its leadership. Those who undermine and weaken the Party weaken the proletarian dictatorship. The Party is the leading force in our state. But the soviet organs should not be identified with the Party. The assertion that the Political Bureau is the highest organ of the state is false. The C.C. and the Political Bureau are party organs, and the leading role in all questions concerning politics falls to the Party. The kind of members composing the Party cadres is of great importance. The comprehensive statistic material at our disposal shows the increased proportion of proletarians in the Party. By July 1, 1925, we had in the Party 911,000 members (including candidates). Of these, 534,000 were workers, i.e., 58.6%; peasants—216,000, i.e. 23.8%; office employees and others, 17.6%. On November 1, 1925 we had 1,025,000 Communists.

The increase of the numbers of the workers in the Party keeps pace with the increase of the industrial proletariat. On 1 July of this year the sum total of the workers had reached 6,500,000; of these 534,000, or 8% of the whole of the workers, are members of the Party. On 1 October the sum total of workers had reached 7 million, of which 570,000, or 8% are in the Party. The proportion of workers in big industrial undertakings who are members of the Party is still greater, 25.5%. The question has been raised as to whether it is possible to increase the workers contingent in the Party to 90%. This is nonsense. We have now 380,000 workers in the Party actually employed in factories. The number of the other members is about 700,000. If these latter are to form only 10%, then the Party must increase to more than 7 million. It is an incontestable fact that the specific weight of the Party in the working class has enormously increased. In the country matters are less favourable in this respect. In proportion to the whole of the agricultural population we have only 0.37% of peasants. The best elements of the peasantry must join our Party. The ideological training of the party cadres has made great progress. The best proof of this is the polemics against Trotskyism. We are now in the midst of a fresh discussion. I am fully confident that the Party will emerge with equal ease from this discussion. (Applause.) I reserve the right of dealing with the opposition of the Leningrad comrades again in my concluding words.

To sum up: the antagonisms in the capitalist world can only be overcome by the workers' revolution in the West. The antagonisms existing in the relations between the Soviet Union and the capitalist countries are expressed in the attempt being made by these latter to reduce our country to an appendage of the capitalist system. We shall defend ourselves against this with the aid of the whole proletariat of the West. The antagonism between world capitalism and world socialism cannot, however, be overcome by us alone. That is the task of the victorious revolution in a number of other countries. We shall overcome the inconsistencies between the capitalist and socialist elements in our own country unaided. He who does not believe this is a liquidator. We are not afraid of the difficulties. He who is afraid should step back and make room for someone with more courage. (Applause.)

To encounter obstacles, and to overcome them, is all part of being a Bolshevik. The Party has not only great successes to record, but mistakes as well. Lenin has taught us not to be proud. But we must point out our successes. The Bolshevik attack upon the economic front has shown the whole world: we are not only capable of destroying capitalism, but of building up the new society, socialism. Nobody can deprive us of these conquests.

We must show them to the whole working class of the West and to the suppressed peoples of the East. We prove that the workers, after they have seized power, know how to govern a country and to build up socialism under difficult conditions.

What does the proletariat of the West need to lead it to victory? Above all it needs faith in its own powers, and the consciousness that the working class can do more than merely destroy—that it can construct something new.

When this has been attained, then it is the beginning of the end, and the victory of the proletarian revolution is not far off. Thus we are not working for nothing when we work for constructive socialism. In this work we shall succeed on an international scale. (Prolonged applause.)

#### CO-REPORT OF COMRADE ZINOVIEV

The time has come for the differences of opinion existing in the Party to be laid before the whole Party for discussion. Doubtless a solution will be found enabling the Party to continue its great work undisturbed.

The situation in which the Party Congress meets may be summed up as follows:

First: After almost five years of the New Economic Policy, Soviet Russia is beginning constructive economic and cultural work on a extensive scale.

Second: These five years have proved that the means to socialism chosen in the New Economic Policy have been perfectly right.

Third: It is an incontestable fact that in Soviet Russia socialism is being built up. The only point upon which there is disagreement is the question: is it possible for a socialist state of society to be completely realized and maintained in an agrarian country such as the Soviet Union? We throw no doubts whatever upon the possibility of the socialist development of the Soviet Union, since the economic and political prerequisites exist, but the final realisation of socialism is only possible on an international scale.

Fourth: It is certain that socialism is being built up, and must be built up in closest alliance with the middle and small peasants.

Fifth: Characteristic for our progress is the extraordinary increase of political activity among the whole population of the Soviet Union, especially of the working population.

The following difficulties exist.

1. The delay of the world revolution and the partial stabilisation of capitalism, extending over a whole period.

2. The development of a socialist state of society in a backward country with a preponderance of peasants.

3. The difficulties of forming a collective party leadership after the death of Lenin.

Under these conditions it is only natural that errors and deviations should occur among some of us, and the Party Conference should not pass over this fact. The present peaceful period involves the danger of stabilisation and liquidation tendencies.

Comrade Zinoviev then proceeded to deal with the real character of the differences of opinion, and declared: In the discussion on state capitalism in the Soviet Union, to idealise the New Economic Policy, and to proclaim the NEP as socialism. The point at issue is not merely one of formulation, but touches our system of politics and the estimation of the economic structure of our country. There is no doubt whatever that our state industry represents, as Lenin himself said, an industry of a consistently socialist nature. But this does not imply that our state undertakings are completely socialist.

State capitalism is not confined to undertaking on leases and concessions, as is now being declared, but extends to free trading, and to the growth of capitalism in the individual agricultural enterprises. It need not be said that state capitalism develops into socialism, and represents, as Lenin declared, a three-quarter socialism.

Comrade Zinoviev recalled how Comrade Bukharin wrote an article in February 1922 in which he refused to recognise the state undertakings as socialist in the strict sense of the term. Comrade Zinoviev asked how it was possible that this reservation was attacked as liquidatory [representing a "liquidator" position—RW] and heretical. The question of state capitalism is not a mere terminological quarrel, but a serious political question, which cannot be passed over.

On the peasant question Comrade Zinoviev declared: It is only those who will not realise the whole truth as to the growth of the rich peasantry who accuse the other comrades of underestimating the middle peasantry. Comrade Zinoviev quoted from a report issued by him on the peasant question in November 1918, in which he took his stand precisely against the underestimation of the middle peasantry. During the present year he again dealt with the matter at the Leningrad Party Conference in January 1925, where he declared that the economic interests of the middle peasantry should be respected. He thus repudiated the reproach of having underestimated the importance of the middle peasant, the leading figure among the Russian peasantry.

Comrade Zinoviev declared to be entirely false the assertion that he is not in agreement with the decisions of the Fourteenth Party Conference and is anxious to reverse these decisions. We are, and continue to be, in agreement with the decisions of the Fourteenth Party Conference, which decisions are perfectly right. The slogan of the development of the productive forces of agriculture is right, as are also the party decisions referring to certain concessions made to the richer strata of peasantry, especially in the questions of land leasing and employment of wage workers. Comrade Zinoviev declared that when he designated these measures of peasant policy as a retreat (at the session of the Communist Faction of the Congress of Soviets), the majority of the Political Bureau raised no objection. In the course of the same speech he had declared that this partial retreat was a part of the main retreat of 1921, of the NEP, which had proved necessary and useful.

The real differences of opinion began at the time of the Fourteenth Party Conference, when Comrade Bukharin sent forth to the peasantry the winged words of "Enrich yourselves!" We shall fight consistently against such an interpretation of the decisions of the Fourteenth Party Conference. It is true that Comrade Bukharin now withdraws these words, but they have been seized upon by others, and some comrades have even gone so far as to propose an extension of the NEP to agriculture, which would almost realise the Neo-NEP desired by our enemies. Had the Party struggle been concentrated against these people, instead of against the Leningrad comrades, many differences of opinion would have been spared. If you are fully convinced that a deviation regarding overestimating the rich peasantry danger is more dangerous for the Party than a deviation of underestimating this danger, then say this forthrightly, and add at the same time that the decisions of the Fourteenth Party Conference should be revised.

Is it not sufficiently symptomatic that there have been people in Georgia who have even begun to speak in the party press of a partial de-nationalisation of the land, and have had to be rebuked by the Georgian Party Committee? It must be remembered that such ideas may gain ground during the present protracted period of stabilisation.

The numerical strength of the kulak peasantry is insignificant, totalling 3 to 4% of the whole peasantry. The absolute number is about 1.5 million, approximately the same as the number of agricultural labourers. The economic power represented by the rich peasant is, however, enormously greater. The rich peasant has his complement in the city, in the new city bourgeoisie, and among some of the specialist and employee elements, who are anxious

to establish political contact with a rich peasantry growing in strength. Besides this, the rich peasant has the support of the whole bourgeois environment of the Soviet Union.

We might be accused of being in a state of panic with regard to the danger of the rich peasant were we merely to name the danger, and not the means of checking the growth of the rich peasant class: the economic support of the poor peasantry, a firm alliance with the poor and middle peasantry, and the isolation of the rich peasantry.

The accusation of panic is however not justified, for we join the Party in prescribing this remedy. We must not idealise the middle peasant, we must not deny that he is a petty bourgeois. We must not assert too hastily that petty bourgeois capitalism no longer predominates in our country, we must not ignore millions of peasant undertakings and ten million roubles worth of agricultural products.

The new peasant policy adopted by the Party has occasioned some confusion among the Communists in the country, for it is interpreted as a withdrawal of the peasant policy based on aid given to the poor peasantry. It has even been asserted in a Communist peasant newspaper that today one middle peasant is of more value in the Party than ten poor peasants!

Such mutilations of Bolshevik peasant policy have nothing in common with true Leninism. It is not necessary to state that we are entirely opposed to any arousing of civil war among the peasantry.

The Soviet power is strong enough today not to be forced to resort again to the methods of War Communism for combating the rich peasant danger. We must however show the poor peasantry plainly that we shall not allow the rich peasantry to pillage the poor. We need not seek refuge in War Communism again. We must hold to the decisions of the Fourteenth Party Conference, but at the same time we must never permit the carrying out of economic measures for developing the productive forces of agriculture to cause us to overlook the political character and importance of the rich peasant.

We shall of course build up socialism with the aid of the New Economic Policy, but we must not endeavour to sweeten the latter. We must not accede to Comrade Bubnov's proposal to strike out the words "not forever" in the formula "The New Economic Policy to be pursued seriously, and for a long time, but not forever."

The proletariat has become stronger; its influence among the peasantry has increased. But if our further increase of strength is to proceed more rapidly and with less friction, we must repulse all tendencies inconsistent with Leninism.

With respect to the third category of differences of opinion, these relate to the composition and the collective leadership of the Party. In this regard we should simply confirm the decision of the Thirteenth Party Conference, which commissioned the C.C. to so adapt its working methods that in the near future the majority of the party membership consists of workers actually employed in the work of production. It is incomprehensible that the concrete proposal made by the Leningrad comrades on this subject should have been attacked so sharply.

Industry has almost reached its pre-war standard. The proletariat is no longer de-classed. The cultural level and activity of the working class have increased enormously. Why is it feared that the joining of large numbers of workers would dilute the Party, and why is it believed that the Party is to be extended by workers belonging to the peasant class? It must be remembered that the old cadre of the proletariat influences the newcomers, not the reverse.

The statistical data show that since the Thirteenth Party Conference the percentage of factory workers in the Party has fallen by 3% despite the fact that their actual number in the Party has increased.

With respect to the leadership of the Party, deviations have occurred in fundamental questions. A firmly established policy has not always existed, otherwise such a slogan as

Bukharin's "enrich yourselves" would never have been tolerated for a moment. It need not be said that our C.C. is composed of the best of the Party, but we must not therefore degenerate into self-glorification, and confuse gestures with firm policy.

Even if no inner differences of opinion existed, and Lenin were still at the head of the Party, this would not abolish the actual objective difficulties now existing, and differing entirely from the difficulties of a few years ago. Our present difficulties are those of growth, of the stabilisation, of the peasant question as affected by the present international situation.

The differences of opinion have been laid before the whole Party rather too late than too soon. Deviations exist, but not those named here. We do not underestimate the importance of the middle peasantry. No single difference of opinion has existed as to the practical measures to be adopted with reference to the middle peasantry since the Fourteenth Party Conference. But with respect to the underestimation of the kulak danger, we can name dozens of deviations. *It is not we who suffer from annihilating lack of faith, but those comrades who try to represent the NEP to be socialism.*

These are our views, and we shall not depart from them. (Applause from the Leningrad delegation.)

#### DISCUSSION ON THE POLITICAL REPORT

Comrade Bukharin.

Comrade Bukharin, who was welcomed with enthusiastic applause, rose as first speaker in the discussion on the political reports of the Central Committee.

I must first draw attention to the special significance of the fact that a member of the Political Bureau gives a co-report on the report of the Central Committee. At every regional conference the opposition has emphasised that it does not put forth a competing line to that laid down by the C.C. This is contradicted by the fact of the co-report, which is without precedent in the history of the Party. In past struggles with various oppositional groups a co-report has never been given.

I ask: what practical measures does the opposition suggest? What new proposals does the opposition make for helping the poor peasantry? Nothing. The Fourteenth Party Conference stated the necessity of establishing a material fund for aiding the poor peasantry and of forming groups among the poor peasantry. The opposition is not in a position to bring forward new proposals, a proof of its political impotence.

The opposition has two propositions:

The first proposal is to organise delegates' unions of the non-party middle peasant youth, in connection with the Young Communist League. This was rejected by the C.C., since the activity of the peasantry is such that these associations would become parallel organisations, incurring the danger of losing the proletarian leadership of the peasantry. This would be a capitulation of the proletariat to the petty bourgeoisie.

The second proposal has been made by a Leningrad comrade named Sarkis, who moved that by the time the Fifteenth Party Conference meets the character of the membership of the Party shall be so arranged that 90% of the members are workers in shops and factories. This would only be possible when the Party has 6 million members. This proposal thus means that the extraordinary admittance of 5 million members to the Party within a year. The significance of this is not merely arithmetical but political. To follow this piece of advice implies the admittance of enormous numbers of peasant elements into the proletarian Party.

The opposition accuses us of abandoning our position under the pressure of the petty bourgeoisie. Both of the above proposals of the opposition are however precisely a capitulation to petty bourgeois peasant tendencies. These oppositional propositions cannot stand criticism.

The present discussion must be regarded in the light of the two preceding discussions against Trotsky.

At the present time we are in the midst of new economic conditions and a new international situation. The Party is seeking feverishly for its correct position in the peasant question under the new circumstances. The first discussion raised the question of inner party democracy, etc. It turned out in the end that the actual question was the peasant question. By the second discussion the Party was better aware of the nature of the struggle. It is not by accident that the problems now placed in the foreground deal with state capitalism, the possibility of realising socialism in one single country, etc.

The nature of the two previous discussions was an enquiry into the relations between the working class and the peasantry. The present discussion is the continuation of the first two. At the present time the Party participates in the discussion with a fuller consciousness of the point at issue, the problems no longer being presented with different labels, but directly. In the earlier discussions the peasant question was raised as a whole, this time the various strata of the peasantry are discussed.

I am firmly convinced that the Party will emerge from this discussion ideologically strengthened and consolidated.

The present discussion is based on a social foundation characterised by three facts:

First: The growth of bourgeois strata in town and country.

Second: The increased activity shown by all classes, especially by the peasant class.

Third: The appearance of a new stratum. The semi-peasant and semi-worker is leaving the villages for the towns and asking whether he is being exploited or not. He is asking in what way the new factory differs from the old.

On the other hand, our policy has not yet had time enough to aid the poor peasantry to the extent projected. The poor peasantry naturally raises a number of questions. The Party is the sole political organisation which must and will solve these questions.

The questions under discussion must be considered in connection with practical politics. At an earlier discussion the question of permanent revolution was raised, as the standpoint of the opposition concealed the doubt as to the possibility of realising socialism in our country. This means the denial of the idea of realising socialism in co-operation with the peasantry under proletarian leadership, a denial based on the notion that the peasantry is entirely antagonistic to the working class, and is even an ally of the counter-revolutionaries. It was proved at the time that the building up of socialism on a wretched technical basis is a very slow process, but nevertheless a possible one.

At a session of the Political Bureau Comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev maintained that only an international socialist revolution would afford a guarantee against intervention, against new wars, and against a restoration of capitalism with the aid of capitalist armies. But at the same time we most energetically rejected the idea that we were destined to ruin on account of our technical backwardness.

This represents an attempt to shunt us back to a track which we have already left behind us. There is a tremendous difference between the assertion of the impossibility of the realisation of socialism in a country in the sense that there is no guarantee for this realisation owing to the danger of intervention, and the assertion of the impossibility of overcoming the difficulties of the transition to socialism on account of the backwardness of techniques and economics, and on account of an overwhelming majority of peasantry.

Comrade Zinoviev must be reproached for not having dealt with this difference in his lately published work. Comrade Zinoviev maintains in his book that the error which he committed in 1917 consisted in his having continued Lenin's standpoint on compromises for some days further. This declaration appears simply ridiculous. In October 1917 Comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev were not taken by surprise, but had formed their own judgement on the question. From April 1917 onwards Comrade Kamenev had maintained that

the peasants could not become the allies of the proletariat, that the socialist revolution could not pre-suppose the co-operation of the proletariat and the peasantry. Comrade Zinoviev first combatted this standpoint in a weakened form, then he supported it, again in a weakened form.

This is the standpoint of lack of faith in the powers of the working class. At that time they maintained that nothing would come of the armed insurrection. Now they maintain that we are ruined unless the international revolution comes. This is the repetition of the same error in another form.

Comrade Zinoviev, in his book on the history of the Russian Communist Party does not mention the peasantry when treating of class relations in 1905. But in the Revolution of 1905 the peasant question was the main problem. Comrade Zinoviev has not admitted and corrected this error, and this is exceedingly harmful since the whole of the youth of the Party is educated in this spirit.

Now to the question of the NEP.

Comrade Zinoviev declares war on all who identify the NEP with socialism. We support this holy war to the utmost extent of our powers. Comrade Zinoviev declares war on all who confused the NEP with socialism. We are fully in accord with him. But there still remains a fundamental difference between us. Comrade Zinoviev treats the NEP almost exclusively as a retreat. Comrade Zinoviev formulates this as follows: the NEP is the broadest path of retreat in Leninism.

How did Lenin regard the NEP? Lenin said: The NEP is a strategic manoeuvre on a large scale, comprising first all elements of retreat, second a regrouping of forces, and third an advance upon a reorganised front line.

While Lenin expressly declared the retreat to be ended, the definition of the NEP as formulated by Comrade Zinoviev is exactly on a par with the lack of faith in the possibility of socialist development under conditions of technical backwardness.

We are passing through a period of retardation in the world revolution. Comrade Salutzky has drawn from this the conclusion of a possible degeneration. (Laughter.) We decidedly contest the standpoint that the NEP is only a retreat. Here we stand on a thoroughly Leninist standpoint.

A question closely bound up with the NEP is that of state capitalism. Many comrades would prefer to evade the proper treatment of the question as now formulated. Instead of answering the question in the light of the most essential problem of the present moment, they put the question as it stood in 1921. The Leningrad comrades maintain that the accusation laid against them, that they deny the consistently socialist character of state industry, is false. Thus they have abandoned their former position, and accept the formulation: the state undertakings are undertakings of a consistently socialist type.

Comrade Zinoviev too is now in favour of this formula. But in his book, "Leninism," there is not a word about it in the chapter on "state industry." On the other hand Comrade Zinoviev expressly asserts that even in our state trusts, in their work system, and even in our co-operatives, there are capitalist elements. We must not deceive the workers with sweet words as to all this being socialism. This is one of the leading passages in Comrade Zinoviev's book.

Without doubt there are capitalist elements everywhere. But why is there no mention of the consistently socialist type of undertakings in Comrade Zinoviev's chapter on state industry?

Objections must also be made to the interpretation of the resolution passed by the Eleventh Party Conference of the Russian C.P., moved by Comrade Lenin, on the role and tasks of the trade unions under the conditions created by the NEP. Comrade Zinoviev maintains that in this resolution Lenin declared the state undertakings to be state capitalism. In reality there is nothing of the kind in the resolution.

Special emphasis must be laid on the fact that Comrade Zinoviev does not refer in his book to Lenin's opinion on the consistently socialist undertakings. And Comrade Zinoviev opposed the draft of the theses on the youth questions, drawn up by the present speaker, and intended to be laid before the Fourteenth Party Conference, for the reason that he considered our undertakings to be state capitalism. Others of the Leningrad comrades, Comrade Evdokimov for instance, have failed to give a definite answer to the question: What are state undertakings? But the Party will have to reply to this question, for the whole proletariat demands it.

Now to the question of the character of state capitalism. This question must be put chiefly from the standpoint of our practical aims. It was from this standpoint that Lenin regarded it, and his article, "On Co-operatives," states that the practical aim of the NEP was the obtaining of concessions. This viewpoint is important, for it answers the question of the difference of opinion existing at one time between Lenin and the present speaker.

Life has erased this difference of opinion in two ways: in the first place we have experienced an enormous rise in state industry; second, we have not granted concessions to the extent anticipated. At that time we had almost no industry but only plans for concessions; now we have our own industry, built up by our own powers. Thus the whole question must be put concretely and practically, in accordance with immediate actuality.

A few remarks on Comrade Zinoviev's assertion: Since we have free trade, we have complete capitalism in so far as free trade exists. It is true that Lenin said: "Free trade is capitalism." But this merely means: Capitalism is being continually born on the basis of free trade. But this is not a reason for regarding capitalism and free trade as synonymous. For instance, one of our state undertakings of the consistently socialist type buys from another similar undertaking. This is a form of exchange of commodities, not a form of socialist distribution. But it is surely not capitalism. Only on the broadest lines can capitalism be identified with free trade. Nobody will deny that we have elements of state capitalism, elements of private capitalism, and elements of petty bourgeois economics. But the fundamental question is the judgment passed on the state undertakings.

Now to the question of the middle peasantry. I ask, do many comrades underestimate the middle peasantry? This question must be replied to in the affirmative. In a programmatic article by Comrade Zinoviev, entitled "The Philosophy of the Epoch," we found at first no middle peasantry. It was only put in later. The decisions of the Fourteenth Party Conference are again dealt with differently by Comrade Zinoviev than by the Party. These decisions chiefly represent the policy of the firm establishment of a close alliance with the middle peasantry.

Comrade Zinoviev, in his book, "Leninism," writes that, "We must now grant supplementary concessions to precisely the capitalist elements of agriculture."

What does this mean, "precisely to the capitalist elements of agriculture?" It means that the NEP is a concession to precisely the big bourgeoisie. If we want to formulate the decisions of the Fourteenth Party Conference precisely as concessions to the village usurers, nobody will lend us an ear. The resolution passed at the Fourteenth Party Conference aims precisely at a firm alliance with the middle peasantry. But Comrade Zinoviev deems it a resolution in favour of the village kulak!

Comrade Zinoviev, in his "Leninism," fails to deal with the very important question of the alteration of the slogan of "Civil War" into "Civil Peace." Comrade Zinoviev does not touch upon this with as much as one word. Lenin's words on the reformist methods, in his article, "The meaning of Gold," are also lacking. Comrade Zinoviev quotes Lenin's formulation of the question of the rich peasantry, his designations of bloodsuckers, vampires, etc. But his dates from the year 1918. And Comrade Zinoviev adds that these words should be repeated more than once.



Comrade Zinoviev's book deals with the burning questions of the day, but the immediate line of party action consists of the extermination of the last remains of War Communism. At the present moment we are fighting with other weapons against the rich peasant.

In Comrade Zinoviev's words there lies hidden the idea of a disorganisation of the decisions passed by the Fourteenth Party Conference: we are to take into account a growing differentiation in the peasantry. In other words, we are to reckon with an intensification of the class struggle in the near future.

Many dangers of an international character exist, since we participate in the international markets. And inner dangers exist as well, for class activity and class differentiation are advancing rapidly. The most important task of all is to unite the working class. The pessimists have not yet grasped that we are confronted with the enormous task of educating fresh strata of the workers.

The Leningrad delegation must admit its errors, just as the one-time secretary of the Leningrad organisation, Zalutzky, has admitted his error on the subject of state capitalism. I must strongly condemn the action of the Leningrad delegation in not sending a tested fighter like Comrade Komarov to the Party Conference, merely because he is loyal to the C.C.

Unity, proletarian discipline, and loyalty to the leading organs are constituents of Bolshevism. We may disagree, criticise, attack; but we must not form factions. The iron discipline of the Party must be maintained. (Applause.) I am fully convinced that the whole of the delegates will submit to the decision of the Party Congress, like one man, and will acknowledge it to be the sole and final interpretation of the Leninist line of the Party. (Applause.)

[After Bukharin several people spoke, most of them attacking Zinoviev and the Leningrad organization, although some of the latter rose to speak in their own defense, and some speakers raised other issues—R.W.]

#### People's Commissar for Finance Sokolnikov

Three fundamental questions arise:

1. The question of the socialist elements in economics;
2. The question of what changes in the relations between town and country will result from the growing differentiation;
3. The question of the relations between Soviet economics and the foreign market.

The first question is that of state capitalism and socialism. The speaker combatted Bukharin's standpoint, and asserted that the railways, for instance, did not become a socialist organization on passing into the hands of the workers' state. Foreign trade, again, is carried on as a state capitalist undertaking. The monetary system is permeated by the principles of capitalist economics, and serves the sole purpose of organising economics under the dictatorship of the proletariat, in order that the socialist elements may grow.

Conditions in the factories are doubtless socialist, but it is another question as to what degree actual socialism has been realised. In the process of reproduction, private capital also takes its share.

The errors committed in the grain transactions were caused by an overestimation of the present possibilities of implementing a systematic plan.

With respect to the second question, the speaker declared that in the future the rich peasant will acquire more and more economic spheres, the capitalist elements in the village are increasing, and it is thus most necessary to concentrate our fire against these. It is necessary that the agricultural taxes should be employed as weapons restricting the growth of the kulak elements.

With regard to the third question, the speaker declared that he was not in agreement with Stalin's formulation. It is true that industry must be developed to the utmost, but our progress depends solely upon the export of agricultural products.

Comrade Kamenev

Sokolnikov was followed by Kamenev. He first protested against the demands that the minority should observe discipline, for since the disagreement is not yet ended, and the Party has not yet issued its decision, such demands are practically an attempt to throttle the discussion. The minority brings forwards resolutions, and has supported the co-report for the reason that it is convinced that a new theoretical school is emerging in the Party, whose wrong principles the Party cannot too energetically repress. The minority is anxious to warn the Party against this current. The second cause of the co-report has been the fact that during the course of the Party Conference serious accusations of liquidation and defeatism have been brought up, and the Party knew nothing of these until the Conference. What ought to have been done was to permit a great open discussion before the Party Conference, in order to clear up all the differences of opinion. (Interjection: "Then you would have lost even the present minority!")

Stalin declared in his Report that our efforts must be concentrated against the deviation of an underestimate of the rich peasantry danger. Bukharin accuses the minority of striving to revoke the New Economic Policy and to return to War Communism.

The October plenary session of the C.C. pointed out in its resolution the existence of two deviations: 1.) The overestimation of the negative aspect of the New Economic Policy; 2.) The lack of comprehension of the necessity for the NEP.

Kamenev energetically denied the accusation of lack of comprehension of the necessity of the NEP, and declared that after five years of experience with the NEP there was no member who failed to recognise the importance and inevitability of the NEP. (Interjection: "Is the underestimation of the middle peasantry then not a lack of comprehension for the NEP?") There is one artificial current in the Party, contradictory to the actual policy of the Party, and this consists of the attempt to beautify the negative aspect of the NEP, to hide the difficulties brought about by the growth of capitalist elements. It is the confusion of the NEP as a means to socialism with socialism itself. It is against this tendency that our forces must be concentrated. The whole international situation, especially the retardation of the world revolution, and further the whole social situation within the Soviet Republics, form a fruitful soil for the growth of this tendency to embellish the NEP. Sooner or later the Party will have to concentrate its whole efforts against these stabilisation moods. In the Party, and in practical economic work, we already have to combat precisely these tendencies, not the alleged attempts at breaking up the NEP.

Stalin's error consists in the fact that though he does not identify himself with this tendency towards the embellishment of the NEP, this deviation of which Bukharin is the ideologist (laughter), still he covers it. The representatives of this deviation fail to recognise that every expansion of the NEP signifies the strengthening of not only the socialist elements, but at the same time of the capitalist elements in town and country.

Kamenev contested the assertion that the decisions of the Fourteenth Party Conference on facilitating the leasing of land, and permitting agricultural wage labour, can be of advantage to the broad masses of the middle and poor peasantry. He did not contest the correctness of the decisions, but considers them solely as concessions to the kulaks.

The dispute over state capitalism again affords an opportunity for the tendency to beautify the NEP. We do not contest the consistently socialist character of state industry, but his socialist character consists of the socialisation of the means of production, while the working conditions in these undertakings are not yet socialist. There are people in our Party who maintain that our state industry is perfect socialism. (Interjection: "That is your imagination!")

The accusations brought against the minority of lack of understanding of the necessity of civil peace after the period of civil war, are untenable and again betray the tendency to glorify the NEP and the failure to recognise the class war in the NEP. There is no danger of the NEP being destroyed, but there is a growing resistance among the capitalist elements, and the danger exists that if we fall behind in the support of the growth of the socialist economic elements we may lose much ground.

Kamenev emphasised how greatly the economic plans projected by the state are dependent on the pressure exercised by the peasantry, as evidenced in particular in the reduced quantity of grain procured. (Interjection: "That is just where you miscalculated!"). It must be recognised that the kulaks are doing their utmost to take advantage of the development of the forces of production in a capitalist direction.

We are not liquidators, but give warning of existing dangers.

#### Comrade Tomsky

Since some members of the Political Bureau have declared at the Party Conference that the Political Bureau of the C. C. has possessed no definite political line, it is necessary that the whole of the Party members be quite clear as to how the differences of opinion have arisen.

The first misunderstandings arose shortly after the conclusion of the last Party discussion against Trotskyism, and were the consequence of the various attitudes taken towards the former and now non-existent opposition. Some comrades were of the opinion that the Party has not such an abundance of forces at its disposal that it should not give every comrade who had committed an error which has been corrected by the Party the opportunity of returning to the normal line of work. Others considered that the former members of the opposition should not only be defeated, but crucified at the same time so to speak. But this difference of opinion was not fought out within the confines of the Political Bureau, whose majority maintained the first standpoint. Instead the Leningrad organisation of the Communist Youth was mobilised in the most irresponsible manner against this majority and against this first standpoint. We were well aware that the initiative did not come from the Communist Youth, but had been forced upon it. Still our sole care was the preservation of unity, and we contented ourselves with calling the Leningrad Youth to order.

When the resolution on the peasant policy was drawn up before the Fourteenth Party Conference, nobody declared that it contained concessions to the rich peasantry; the disagreement in the C.C. referred to the question of whether it is possible to build up socialism in one single country. Zinoviev and Kamenev the whole time swore allegiance to the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference; to the Leningrad organisation they invariably expressed their solidarity with the policy of the C. C. only to appear on the scene at this Congress with a co-report. For the Leningrad organisation would never send delegates who would oppose the policy of the C.C. Instead of settling all differences of opinion with the C.C. itself, attempts were made in Leningrad to create an opposition.

Bukharin has repeatedly withdrawn his words: "Enrich yourselves;" he has repeatedly acknowledged this error before the whole Party; this slogan has been disavowed by the C.C. And yet it is still being subjected to criticism, simply for the reason that there are comrades who are anxious, not so much to disavow this slogan, as to discredit Bukharin. The attempt is thus being made to crucify not only the members of the former opposition, but Bukharin with them. This will not succeed. (Applause.)

Where has any real fundamental change in the political situation taken place in the period between the Fourteenth Party Conference and this year's October plenary session of the C.C.? There has been no such fundamental alteration in the political and economic situation....

Tomsky regretted that Kamenev and Zinoviev made no mention of the role and position of the Communist Party under the present historical conditions, especially the conditions

formed by the idea that anyone wanted to get rid of Kamenev or Zinoviev. The Party is not so rich in leading forces that anyone could have such a mad idea. Kamenev's attempts to show that Stalin is trying to acquire sole rule, and that the majority of the Political Bureau are aiding him, are equally ridiculous. Tomsy declared that a truly collective leadership is exercised in the Political Bureau and the system of individual rulers will never be permitted; this system never can and never will exist. (Enthusiastic applause.)

Tomsy concluded his speech by calling upon the critics of the C.C. to exercise loyalty and discipline, and pointed out that Zinoviev and Kamenev had never laid before the C.C. these questions of the party leadership which they were now submitting to the Party Congress. Zinoviev and Kamenev have never made any definite suggestions for the alteration of important decisions of the C.C. The Party sees the difficulties, but the critics of the C.C. should not raise additional ones by their attitude; they should admit their errors and respect the will of the Party. (Prolonged and enthusiastic applause.)...

[After Tomsy a series of speakers addressed the various issues, most of them attacking Zinoviev and Kamenev, but some defending them or some of the issues they had raised—R.W.]

### Comrade Rykov

No uniform political line has ever existed, exists, or can exist, among the separate representatives of the new opposition. When Kamenev, Zinoviev, Sokolnikov, Lashevich, and Krupskaya, now form a group, it is one held together only by the desire to change the party leadership. In the important questions themselves these comrades hold entirely different views from one another.

Comrade Sokolnikov, for instance, supports the opposition from the right, from the standpoint that the existing dangers and the difficulties of socialist development render further concessions necessary. Comrade Krupskaya points out that the slogan, "Enrich yourselves," has been as damaging as the tendency, originated by Sokolnikov, towards the abolition of the foreign trade monopoly.

The fundamental point of contention is the peasantry question, and the dangers from the village. In the present stage of our revolution passive sympathy or neutrality towards the peasants is no longer sufficient. It is now time to work along with the peasantry towards the realisation of socialism, and to find effective means of gaining political and economic influence over the peasantry, to the end that the progress of socialism may be facilitated. Thus the question of our relations to the middle peasantry, already raised by Lenin with the utmost clarity at the Eighth Party Conference, is of the greatest importance. the necessity of lending further support to the poor peasantry and to the agricultural labourers, who form our main auxiliary in the work of winning over the middle peasantry, needs not be emphasised.

The negative aspects of the NEP, which are being especially emphasised at the present time, will continue to exist until our whole state of society has been rebuilt on socialist principles. But this is no reason to keep shrieking out the whole time that the negative aspects of the NEP must be combatted; the transitional stage will be better employed in examining what new tasks are imposed by the new changes in the economic situation and in class relations. The task imposed by the present period differs from that of the last in demanding the establishment of a really firm alliance between the working class and the middle peasantry for the common task of constructive socialism, by means of the co-operatives, the industrialisation of agriculture, etc.

The real danger represented by the kulak peasantry at the present time does not consist of any immediate danger of a bourgeois restoration, but in the fact that the rich peasant strata are striving to drag the middle peasantry in their train. Thus the fight against the rich peasantry is a struggle for the winning of the middle peasantry. To win over the middle

peasantry is synonymous with rendering the rich peasantry harmless. It is necessary to isolate the rich peasant strata, and gradually to induce the middle peasantry to take part in the work of constructive socialism. Comrade Stalin was therefore right in laying special emphasis on the necessity of combatting that deviation which underestimates the importance of the middle peasantry....

With respect to the inner party situation, I recall Kamenev's assertion that in the C.C. there are no deviations from Leninism, but that a group of young Red professors is forming round Bukharin, and setting up wrong theories. Even if this were really the case, would it be sufficient reason to throw the Party into the present fever of discussion, and to put forth a co-report in opposition to the C.C.? On the eve of the Congress, Comrade Zinoviev declared that he recognised the possibility of a unanimous common drafting of the resolution to the political report, all Stalin's theses being acceptable, but that no changes must be made in the present leadership of the Leningrad organisation. Thus the differences of opinion resolve themselves into a conflict as to whether the Party should have one or two centres. We are of the opinion that there can only be one centre in the Party. (Hear hear!) We therefore declined to accede to Zinoviev's demand with regard to Leningrad, in consequence of which Zinoviev refused to take part in the common drawing up of the draft resolution, and moved that his co-report be heard at the Party Congress. (Cries of "Shame!")

If the opposition had made any practical proposal for combatting or lessening the negative effects of the NEP, this proposal would have been accepted without discussion. But apart from Sokolnikov's suggestion of abolishing the foreign trade monopoly, not a single practical suggestion was submitted. It is nonsense to accuse anyone of underestimating the rich peasantry danger. Let the opposition name even one delegate who fails to recognise the negative aspects of the NEP or the growing strength of the village bourgeoisie.

I must remind you that the accusation of underestimating the rich peasant danger, and of emphasising the existing difficulties, became particularly vehement just at the moment when it became evident that the expectations placed upon good crops had been exaggerated. The members of the opposition held the resistance of the rich peasantry to be the cause of the grain deficiency of 200 million poods. As a matter of fact the middle and small farmers have been equally unwilling to part with their grain. The whole point is not the resistance of the rich peasantry, but the wrong economic plans, which was not corrected in time by Comrade Kamenev, although his position as Chairman of the Council for Labour and Defence imposed upon him the duty of regulating the economic plans in general. The majority of the C.C. on the other hand, recognised the error in time and altered the first plans. The opposition should remember that the great public discussion demanded by the opposition cannot possibly under present conditions remain within the confines of the Party. The question of the varying attitude taken to the various strata of the peasantry would be discussed with even greater passion by these strata themselves, and political strife would be aroused with the non-partisan masses. When the opposition makes such impossible demands, it does it with the object of intimidating the majority, for the opposition is quite aware that the Party is anxious that Comrades Stalin, Zinoviev, Rykov, Kamenev, and the others, should all work together. The opposition and all other members of the Party may take note that the Party will never accede to such demands, and that the Party never has, and never will, bow down either to Stalin or Kamenev. (Enthusiastic applause.)

The party has grown; fresh trained cadres have been brought forward during the years of the Revolution, and the Party will not be placed in any difficulty if it has to do without one or the other of us. (Applause.)

I must also remind you of various declarations made by Comrade Zinoviev at the time of last year's discussion against Comrade Trotsky, at which time he most strenuously opposed any formation of factions, any grouping of comrades, and I express the wish that

Comrade Zinoviev and the Leningrad delegation would repeat their words regarding unshakable party unity and impermissibility of group formation today, now that this is doubly necessary. (Applause.)

I will not deny that our socialist construction is encountering, and will encounter, obstacles, or that the NEP contains negative and dangerous aspects. But every member of the Party should realise that the conduct of the opposition at the Party Congress will be the cause of hundred-fold greater difficulties, should a faction struggle result therefrom. The Party Congress must therefore see to it that the future C.C. regardless of the elements of which it is composed, does not find itself opposed by another centre, another organisation with its own press and its own connections. A double centre, feudalism, and the League of Nations, all these have no place in our Party. (Enthusiastic and prolonged applause with ovations. Singing of the Internationale. Shouts of, "Long live the unity of the Russian Communist Party!")

#### Comrade Zinoviev's Concluding Speech

We can divide the questions into three groups:

1. Questions of principle;
2. History of the differences of opinion;
3. Solution of the situation and practical programme.

Attempts were made at a preventive understanding, in order to avoid the discussion at the Party Congress. We declined to entertain this attempt, since without any guarantee of what was to follow, our capitulation and the revision of the organisational decisions of the Leningrad Party Conference were demanded. This circumstance, as also some of the declarations made in Stalin's report, induced us to bring forward a co-report.

Comrade Bukharin accuses us of regarding the NEP merely as a retreat, which means a deviation from Leninism. I have frequently spoken of Bolshevism as an advance against the bourgeois system, against counter-revolutionary social democracy, and against imperialism, and I have especially emphasised that the retreat was made in order to render a greater advance possible.

Comrade Zinoviev, quoting from his own work, "Leninism," declared that he protests categorically against the attempt to represent him as an apologist of retreat. With reference to the accusation in the question of the underestimation of the middle peasantry, Zinoviev referred to the fact that the slogan, "The Face to the Peasantry!" was issued by him. This slogan referred to the whole peasantry, and thus included the middle peasantry. As to the question of the leadership of the Revolution, the speaker declares that at the present time the forms of the proletarian dictatorship should be rendered more along the lines of Soviet democracy.

With regard to the possibility of realising socialism in one single country, Stalin has asserted that the organisation of socialist production is only possible with the assistance of the proletariat of some other civilised countries, and he denies that in the Political Bureau he pointed out our technical backwardness.

Comrade Zinoviev denied having tried to cover up the error committed by him in October 1917. Comrade Bukharin has accused him of not having mentioned the peasantry when describing the events in 1905 in his history of the Party. Incontestably this was a mistake but not one from which it need be concluded that the writer of the book ignores the peasantry. The peasantry is widely dealt with in the book. Zinoviev further protested against Bukharin's assertion that he had maintained that the Soviet Union was still without any socialist foundation. Much has been recovered, the Soviet Union approaches the pre-war standard. It would however be wrong to take this fact as basis for the assertion that we have built up the foundation of a socialist economy.

The speaker proceeded to deal with the question of the differences of opinion existing on the peasant policy. Comrade Stalin's report laid special emphasis on a thesis which is

not contained in the resolution of the October plenary session of the C.C. and of the Moscow Party Conference. This is the thesis on the concentration of the fire of the Party against the deviation of underestimating the importance of the NEP.

The Party Congress is of course supreme, and can make decisions independent of the plenary session. But Stalin's addition is polemical in character. The more events develop, the clearer does it become that it was a grave political error to direct our fire against those who pointed out the kulak danger. The fact that the kulak is gaining ground arises out of our whole present political and economic situation. The political appetite of the kulak grows with his growth, and he will find his political complement in the city. This danger can be fought, if we foresee the danger early enough.

There is no doubt that much successful work has already been accomplished toward a rapprochement with the middle peasantry, but on the other hand nothing has been accomplished towards a rapprochement to the poor peasantry. This constitutes a tremendous political danger. The policy pursued, by the Party among the peasantry is correct in principle, but in the course of the actual execution of this policy a number of difficulties have been encountered. The task set us at the present juncture is to expended every effort upon reaching the poor peasantry. Thus our fire must be directed against those who fail to fully realise the kulak danger.

The speaker protested against the assertion that he regards the agricultural labourer objectively as a dominant factor. The agricultural labourer is exploited by the kulak. It must be admitted that the C.C. is not to blame for the discontent among the poor peasantry. But the danger must be fully realised; not that we need fall into a panic, but that we may recognise the political problem.

The speaker referred to Lenin's formulation, at the Eighth Party Conference, of the two counter agents: the working class and the poor peasantry on the one hand, and the middle peasantry on the other. So it must remain. Not the working class on the one side, and the poor and middle peasantry on the other.

The speaker then proceeded to reply to the attacks made on his article entitled, "The Philosophy of the Epoch." In the first place the article was not written for the purpose of forming a platform for the Party Congress. The most far reaching accusation is that which places a vulgar democratic interpretation upon the slogan of "equality." This slogan has been described as social-revolutionary and liberal demagoguery. The attempt to prove that the slogan of "equality" was intended to be thrown out to the masses in a bourgeois-democratic sense is a gross misrepresentation. It may be admitted that the term "socialist equality" is more accurate, and the slogan may be well thus altered. But when Rykov and Kalinin deem this slogan demagogic, that is again an overestimation of the NEP.

The speaker protested against the action of a group of young Red professors, who are revising Leninism.

As to the question of the composition of the party membership, Zinoviev declared the Leningrad Conference to be of the opinion that at the present time 50% of the Leningrad metal workers should be admitted into the Party. This would not mean padding by any means. In the present situation, and given the present relation of class forces, our slogan must be, "Workers, nearer to the state, to the Party, to economic construction!"

The speaker then passed on to the question of the Leningrad organisation, and declared that the latter is not isolated, and will not be isolated. The speaker, in the course of a description of the differences of opinion, declared that he had altered his attitude after being accused of being a liquidator and defeatist. Leningrad is entitled to one of the leading positions, for its organisation has earned prominent importance in our historical development. The Leningrad delegation has the right to make proposals for the alteration of the political line.

The speaker then described the differences of opinion in the C.C. After the second discussion with Trotsky, Bukharin and Kalinin represented the standpoint that no

organisational consequences were necessary, as the party masses would not understand them. The speaker and the comrades sharing his views represented on the other hand the standpoint that if Trotsky were accused of being a semi-Menshevik, there could be no place for him in the general staff of Leninism. (Interjection from Trotsky: "Quite so!") The same may be maintained with regard to the present discussion. If the Party Conference is seriously of the opinion that he and the comrades accused of being defeatists really are such, then they should not be permitted to hold the highest leading positions in the Party. The accusation of defeatism was never raised against Trotsky.

The differences of opinion accumulated, it became increasingly difficult to work together. The differences of opinion have matured, and it would be wrong to maintain that no political differences of opinion exist. Great problems are maturing in connection with the peasant question, and from these arise the differences of opinion in the Party. It is beyond doubt that new groups are growing in the Party, and these will take leading parts. There is no doubt whatever that the leadership must lie in the collective hands of the C.C.

The assumption that the opposition demands Bukharin's head is entirely wrong. We must remember Lenin's remark that it was impossible to be angry with Bukharin, even during the sharpest fight. It must further be remembered that the foreign Communists, and the Communist and social democratic press, will be deeply interested in the discussion. It is decidedly undesirable to bring the discussion to a close, for the accused comrades have had not opportunity of publicly replying to the accusations.

The speaker then proceeded to deal with the solution of the situation. After stating that he advanced no special policy in opposition to that of the C.C., he passed on to the enumeration of the concrete proposals:

1. Combating of the revisionist "school" created by the young Red professors. The slogan must be: "Back to Lenin."
2. Inadmissibility of a revision of Leninism in the question of state capitalism.
3. The thesis on the concentration of our fire against one of the deviations in the peasant question must be rejected.
4. In the question of the composition of the party membership there must be no deviation from the decisions of the Thirteenth Party Conference.
5. The question of the extension of inner party democracy must be raised.
6. The agitation against Leningrad must cease. The Leningrad organisation must be given the opportunity of choosing its own leaders.
7. The Central Committee must induce all the forces of the former groups to participate in the work, and give them the possibility of working under the leadership of the C.C. (Noise, shouts: "Repeat!")
8. Security must be given that the functionaries are chosen by election.
9. At the first session of the C.C. the question of the limitations of the functions of the Political Bureau, of the Organisational Bureau, and of the Secretariat, in the direction of setting up a fully competent Political Bureau and the Secretariat subordinate to it, is to be dealt with.

Comrade Zinoviev closed with the hope that the discussion closes a chapter, and enables one to be begun in which co-operation will be possible. The responsibility lies with the majority of the Party Congress.... (Prolonged applause from the Leningrad delegation.)

[Molotov's concluding speech on organizational issues is omitted, R.W.]

#### Comrade Stalin's Concluding Speech

Comrade Stalin, welcomed by enthusiastic storms of applause, said:

I shall not make any reply to attacks of a personal nature, since the Party Conference possesses sufficient material for ascertaining the truth and recognising the real motives for these attacks.



I shall first reply to Comrade Sokolnikov's declaration that I have incorrectly drawn the two general lines of the economic development of the Soviet Union. I should not have spoken of the import of industrial equipment, but of the import of finished products. Objectively considered, Comrade Sokolnikov here makes himself to an adherent of the Dawesation of the Soviet Union [reference to the economic policies of the Dawes Plan—R.W.]. Everyone is aware that we are forced to import machinery at present. But Comrade Sokolnikov makes a virtue of this necessity, a principal, a theory, a line of development. Here is his error. My outline of the two general lines of economic construction was intended to help to clear up the question of the possibility of securing the independent economic development of the Soviet Union in a capitalist environment.

Our general line consists in the conversion of the Soviet Union from an agrarian country into an industrial one. If we remain sticking at that stage of development where we ourselves do not produce the machinery, but have to import it, then we cannot be sure of safeguarding our country against being transformed into an appendage of the capitalist system. Thus we must devote our energies to developing the production of means of production. The Dawes plan is anxious to see the German payments guaranteed by the German exploitation of foreign markets, especially the Soviet market. That is, it is anxious to maintain a state of affairs in which we import machinery, export agricultural products, and permit our industry to follow in the train of Europe. When speaking of this I declared that the Dawes Plan stands on feet of clay so far as the Soviet Union is concerned, for we are not going to remain an agrarian country for love of any other country, but are determined to become an industrial country.

The whole of our economists must adopt this idea. It is the only guarantee for our economic independence. To deviate from this line like Comrade Sokolnikov is to renounce socialist construction altogether.

In the second place I must reply to Comrade Kamenev's assertion that the decisions of the Fourteenth Party Conference which precisely defined the legislation on land leases and agricultural wage labour are not concessions to the peasantry, but to the kulaks, the capitalist elements. I ask the opposition why they voted for these decisions if they consider them to be a fresh extension of the NEP. We are all against the extension of the NEP. But Comrade Kamenev forgets that the NEP includes free trade, capitalism, and wage labour, and that the decisions of the Fourteenth Party Conference are an expression of this new economic policy introduced in Lenin's time. Lenin fully recognised that at first the NEP would be exploited by the capitalists, kulaks, and profiteers. But he never said that the introduction of the NEP meant a concession, not to the peasantry, but to the capitalist elements. On the contrary, he pointed out that the admission of free trade and the introduction of the NEP represented a concession to the peasantry, granted in order that an alliance might be formed and firmly established with the peasantry. This is further proved by the emphasis laid by Lenin on the decisive importance of the middle peasantry among the peasantry of Russia today.

When the land was seized during the Revolution, the whole of the peasantry joined against the landowners, but the kulaks gained the most, while little fell to the poor peasantry. During the further course of the Revolution, the poor peasantry organised with the aid of the Soviet power, and wrested much from the kulak. The relations of forces among the peasantry have become better balanced, and the middle peasant has become the decisive figure in the village. Lenin wrote that we must accommodate our state economics to those of the middle peasantry.

It must be emphasised that the NEP and its trade possibilities are not only exploited by the capitalists and kulaks but at the same time by the state and co-operative organs which are now supplanting private trade more and more, and connecting state industry with the peasant undertakings. Our concessions aim at strengthening the alliance between the working class and the peasantry. Those who do not grasp this are not Leninists, but liberals.

Comrade Sokolnikov declares that the present economic complications are due to the overestimation of our powers and of our socialist maturity. Comrade Sokolnikov even goes so far as to attribute the mistakes of our leading economic organs, which are to blame for our adverse foreign trade balance, to the errors of the so-called Bukharin theoretical school, which is accused of an overestimation of the socialist maturity of our economics. Even the fervour of discussion must have its limits however. Comrade Sokolnikov declares further that in his capacity as finance commissar he is prevented from imparting the character of an income tax to the agricultural tax, and in this manner protecting the interests of the poor peasantry.

The agricultural tax is already an income tax, and the formal alterations in this regard are in course of preparation. But the sworn protector of the poor peasantry, Comrade Sokolnikov, frequently forgets to protect their interests in actual practice. For instance he recently protested against the decision of Comrade Miliutin, finance commissar to the R.S.F.S.R., to abstain from insisting on the collection of taxes less than one rouble in amount, although this only meant a loss of 300,000 roubles, while it possesses the advantage of releasing the poor peasantry from this tax and of freeing the state from the costs of collection. The C. C. was obliged to intervene before Sokolnikov could be induced to adopt this correct measure.

Now to the assertion made by the opposition, and propagated in one of their publications on the questions under contention, that I had expressed myself to a delegation of peasant correspondents as being in favour of the restoration of the private ownership of land. This could be inferred from the impressions of a peasant correspondent belonging to this delegation, published in the peasant newspaper "Bednota." Similar rumours of such a declaration on my part were spread all over the world by a bourgeois press agency in Riga. Despite the obvious absurdity of such a supposition, I published a letter in the "Bednota" in which I declared that the very imaginative writers of all such inventions were solely responsible for them. In spite of this public denial on my part, and in spite of the obviously untrue character of the assertion, the opposition utilises the methods of the lying bourgeois press and seizes upon this lie.

With respect to Comrade Krupskaya, I must emphasise the extreme erroneousness of her interpretation of the NEP as capitalism permitted by the proletarian state. The correct definition of the NEP is the following:

*The NEP is the special policy of the proletarian state, so adapted that it admits capitalism whilst retaining in the hands of the proletarian state the essential commanding positions of economics, such as big industry, transport service, foreign trade monopoly, etc. It is a policy adapted to the struggle between the socialist and capitalist elements, to the increasing importance of the socialist elements at the cost of the capitalist, to the victory of the socialist elements over the capitalist, to the abolition of the classes, and to the creation of the foundation of socialist economy.*

Those who fail to realise the dual transitional character of the NEP deviate from Leninism. If the NEP were capitalism, Lenin would have said, "Capitalist Russia will become socialist Russia." But Lenin did not do this; he gave us his famous proposition, NEP Russia will become socialist Russia. Let the opposition state clearly whether it is in agreement with Comrade Krupskaya's definition of the NEP as capitalism.

In the discussion on state capitalism the comrades of the opposition remind us of Bukharin's error in disagreeing with Lenin's assertion that the theory of state capitalism is compatible with the proletarian dictatorship. Bukharin has admitted this error. It is not that Lenin's views changed in agreement with Bukharin's, but Bukharin's in agreement with Lenin's. Therefore Bukharin has our full support. (Applause.)

Comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev do not deal with the question of state capitalism through the dialectic method, but through the scholastic, and without consideration of the given historical conditions. I may remind you that in 1921 Lenin, in face of the unheard

of industrial depression and great shortage of goods among the peasantry, considered the best way out of the situation at that time to be the admission of foreign capital to build up industry, that is, in the introduction of state capitalism and in the strengthening of the alliance between workers and peasantry. In the depressed economic situation of that time other possibilities did not exist. Today the situation is different; the Soviet industries approach the pre-war standard, the transport service has been restored, Soviet industry is establishing with its own powers the connection with the peasantry, the socialist forms of economics dominate over the state capitalist forms, and the latter, the undertakings under concession and lease, are employing only 58,000 workers out of a total proletariat of seven million. To represent state capitalism as the dominant economic form today is to misrepresent the socialist character of our state industry, to fail to grasp the difference between the previous and the present situation, and to treat the question of state capitalism on the methods of scholasticism and metaphysics instead of on those of dialectics. Comrade Sokolnikov has gone so far astray in this direction that he holds the state bank and the whole Soviet financial system to be state capitalists. As opposed to this it will be remembered that in 1917 Lenin, although at that time he still represented the standpoint of the control and not the nationalisation of production, regarded the state bank, nine-tenths in the hands of the proletarian state, as a socialist institution. Sokolnikov will perhaps go so far as to designate the finance commissariat and other proletarian state institutions as state capitalists. Sokolnikov has not grasped the dual nature of the New Economic Policy, or the dialectics of development under the proletarian dictatorship during the period of transition, in which the methods and weapons of the bourgeoisie are successfully applied by the socialist economic elements against the capitalist, combating these capitalist elements on the one hand and building and establishing the socialist foundation of economy on the other.

Now to the peasant question! It may be seen from the speeches and articles of Zinoviev that until recently Zinoviev still held the standpoint of the neutralisation of the middle peasantry, and that he only went over to the standpoint of the necessity of a firm alliance with the middle peasantry after the inner political struggle had begun, that is shortly before the Party Conference, when the underestimation of the importance of the middle peasantry was being severely condemned by the whole Party. At the beginning of the year Zinoviev wrote in *Pravda* that a common task falls to all the parties of the Comintern: to win over the agricultural proletariat, the semi-proletariat, the tenant farmers, and the small holders, as allies for the proletariat, and to neutralise the middle farmers. (Interjection from the Leningrad delegation: "Russia was not meant.") Stalin: "Is our Party then not a part of the Comintern?" (Applause.) As early as the Eighth Party Congress of the Russian C.P. Lenin contended energetically against the underestimation of the middle peasantry, and pointed out that what was necessary was not the neutralisation, but the winning, of the middle peasantry. Numerous other declarations on the part of Zinoviev might be adduced, in which the middle peasantry is either completely ignored or represented as an object to be neutralised.

With respect to Zinoviev's declarations in the "Philosophy of the Epoch" on the domination of the idea of equality among the masses of the people, it must be emphasised that the idea of equality cannot be dealt with without an exact specification of the quality meant, whether between workers and peasants, between skilled and unskilled workers, or in connection with the final abolition of class society. The slogan of equality should be as little played with in a responsible article appearing in the central organ of the Party as the word "Leninism" can be played with without definitely realising the actual tasks of Leninism in the sphere of peasant politics. It was not until shortly before the Party Congress that Comrade Zinoviev declared at a discussion in Leningrad that he was in favor of a firm alliance with the middle peasantry. Unfortunately we possess no guarantee that Comrade Zinoviev will not deviate again from this slogan before long, for the facts show us that Comrade

Zinoviev has never been distinguished by the necessary consistency in the peasantry question. (Applause.)

When we are told that we must contend with equal energy against both deviations, that is, against the underestimation and the overestimation of the kulak danger, we must take into account that up to the present the first of these tendencies has only been expressed by a non-responsible member of the Party, in the theoretical periodical, "Bolshevik," while the second tendency is represented by a Zinoviev and a Kamenev, who have at their disposal their own press organ in Leningrad and their own organisation centre. Bogushevsky is however politically done for [the author of the article in "Bolshevik"—R.W.].

We must recollect how the differences of opinion arose at the end of 1924, when the Leningrad organisation moved that Trotsky be expelled from the Party. The majority of the C.C. declared themselves opposed to this, and confined themselves to removing Trotsky from his position as war commissar. The majority of the C.C. were of the opinion that this motion, as also the proposal moved by Zinoviev and Kamenev for the expulsion of Trotsky from the Political Bureau, involved grave dangers for the Party; expulsions are infectious, and can go too far. (Applause.)

Further differences of opinion arose when the Leningrad organisation of the Communist Youth took upon itself the functions of a second center of the Young Communist League and endeavoured to transform the Leningrad regional conference into a sort of all-Russian Young Communist conference, and the C.C. was obliged to take measures against this attempt at forming a system of double centres. The C.C. was further obliged to reject Comrade Zinoviev's proposal to issue a second theoretical periodical in Leningrad, edited exclusively by comrades of the opposition. The C.C. considered itself to be acting rightly in considering the interests of the Party higher than the observance of a formal party democracy, and it prohibited the publication of a factional periodical, just as it will have to prohibit this in the future. (Applause.)

The comrades of the opposition, who are still nagging on about the slogan to the peasantry, "Enrich Yourselves," although this has already been disavowed a thousand times both by Bukharin himself and the C.C., might point out one passage in an article in a central organ, or in a declaration of the C.C., in which this slogan is re-issued. The C.C. has on the contrary exercised the utmost care to ensure the ideological purity of the articles and speeches on this subject, in order that the development of the productive forces of the village may not be interpreted as a slogan issued by the Party for private capitalist accumulation. Bukharin's error, speedily recognised, withdrawn, and regretted, is ridiculously insignificant in comparison with the errors of those comrades who in October 1917 infringed doubly the decisions adopted under Lenin's leadership on the October action.

Not only does the opposition not represent any uniform standpoint, but its assertions are entirely contradictory, and exclude one another. There is only one point upon which it is agreed, and that is the reform of the Secretariat of the C.C. Despite the complete absurdity of such a programme, it is an incontestable fact. After the Twelfth Party Congress in 1923 a group of comrades worked out a plan for abolishing the Political Bureau and converting the Secretariat into a leading political and organisational organ, composed of Zinoviev, Trotsky, and Stalin. This plan signified that the Party was to dispense with the leadership of Rykov, Kalinin, Tomsy, Molotov, and Bukharin. This plan fell through at the time, not only on account of its lack of principle, but on account of the impossibility of conducting the Party without these comrades. When an inquiry was addressed to me on the matter, I replied with a decided No, and declared that I am prepared, should the comrades desire it, to evacuate my position without fuss, without open or concealed discussion, without demanding rights, guarantees, and claims for the minority. (Laughter.)

At the present moment precisely the contrary demand is being made; not the politisation of the Secretariat, but its technicisation; not the abolition of the Political Bureau, but its

complete dominance. It is possible that a reform on these lines would please Comrade Kamenev, but it would not please the Party. (Applause.) A technical Secretariat would scarcely be able to prepare the questions for the Political Bureau as hitherto. (Interjections: "Hear, hear!") The demand for the complete dominance of the Political Bureau is simply ridiculous, for the secretariat is subordinate to the Political Bureau and the latter to the plenary session of the C.C. The opposition is fond of talking of the difficulties of the moment, but still it forgets the greatest difficulty of all, the disorganisation of the Party. (Applause.) The majority of the C.C. had this danger in view when it made compromise proposals to the opposition three days before the Party Conference, with the aim of a possible understanding. This communication, signed by Comrades Kalinin, Stalin, Bukharin, Rykov, Rudzutak, Tomsky, Molotov, and Dzerzhinsky, declared complete solidarity with the resolution passed by the Moscow regional conference against all deviation from the line of the Party. It emphasised at the same time that, in order to preserve the unity of the Party, and to avoid the alienation of the Leningrad organisation, one of the best in the Party, the undersigned members of the Central Committee are prepared, after a definite political line has been ascertained by the Party Congress, to make several concessions, including: to use the resolution passed by the Moscow Party Conference as basis for the Party Congress resolution on the political report in moderating some of the formulations; the avoidance of mutual polemics among the members of the Political Bureau at the Party Conference; the condemnation in the Party Congress speeches of Sarkis' standpoint on the composition of the party membership, and of Safarov's standpoint on state capitalism; the immediate execution, after the Party Congress, of the C.C.'s decision to include a Leningrad comrade in the Secretariat of the C.C. and the like inclusion of a Leningrad comrade in the editorial staff of the central organ; the selection, in agreement with the C.C., of a better qualified comrade to replace the present incompetent editor of the *Leningradskaja Pravda*.

The opposition preferred not to come to an understanding, and chose an open and obstinate struggle at the Party Congress. This is their love of peace. The majority of the C.C. continues to hold to the essentials of the above communication. As is generally known, some formulations were moderated in the draft of the political resolution in the interest of party peace.

We are against the policy of expulsion; it is an abomination to us. But this must not be taken to mean that the leaders will be allowed to waver unrestrictedly. The Party wants unity, and will attain it, with Kamenev and Zinoviev if they like, and without Kamenev and Zinoviev if they do not like. (Interjections: "Quite so!" Applause.)

The unity of the Party presupposes the submission of the minority to the majority. Discussions must not be carried too far, and we must not forget that we are a governing party. With respect to the structure of the leading organs, the Party will scarcely agree to their mutilation. (Interjection: "Hear, hear!" Applause.)

The Political Bureau is plenipotentiary, and is subordinate to the plenary session of the C.C., which appears to have been forgotten by some comrades who have lost their balance. The unity of the Party can and will be preserved if the Party does not permit itself to be intimidated. The Party can only be conducted collectively. It would be nonsense to dream of any other kind of party leadership since Lenin's death. (Enthusiastic applause.)

Should any one of us run astray, he will be called to order. With regard to the Leningrad workers, they will doubtless remain in the front rank of the Party. Along with them we have built up the Party, unfolded the banner of revolution in October 1917, defeated the bourgeoisie, and along with them we shall combat the difficulties of today. I am firmly convinced that the Leningrad workers and Communists will not lag behind their party brothers in the other industrial centres in the fight for the steel-like Leninist unity of the Party. (Enthusiastic and prolonged applause. Singing of the Internationale.)

*International Press Correspondence*, VI, No. 5 (15 January 1926), 69-80; Vol. 6, No. 7 (22 January 1926), 89-100, with modifications.

THE FOURTEENTH PARTY CONGRESS ENDORSES  
THE STALIN-BUKHARIN LEADERSHIP  
23 December 1925

*The Congress was tightly controlled by the Stalin-Bukharin leadership and overwhelming endorsed the Central Committee's report (the political report was given by Stalin, for the first time, and the organizational report by Molotov). Zinoviev, although he had insisted on making a co-report to the Congress, did not introduce a competing resolution, but did oppose the Central Committee report. The latter carried by 559 to 65 (with 41 votes unaccounted for, either absent or not voting). The resolution endorsed the general position of the Stalin-Bukharin leadership on all issues and provides therefore a summary of the disputes before the Congress and the leadership's position on them.*

ON THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Party Congress, fully approves the political and organizational line of the Central Committee, which strengthened the Party of the working class, promoted the general advance of the national economy throughout the whole country and consolidated the position of socialism within and without the Soviet Union.

This policy has resulted in the *international* sphere in a number of fresh recognitions of the Soviet Union by the capitalist countries; the Soviet Union concluded fresh commercial and concession treaties, extended its foreign trade and consolidated its international position. The same policy has resulted, in *domestic* affairs, in the Soviet Union being in a position to balance the state budget and rapidly to bring about the development of industry and the further growth of agriculture, along with a general increase in wages and a greater output on the level and to secure a growing role for the socialist elements in the entire Soviet economy. Thanks to the same policy the Soviet Union has consolidated the *alliance between the working class and the peasantry* and secured the *proletarian leadership of this alliance*, increased the actual role and importance of the cooperatives, brought together, upon the basis of socialist construction, broad sections of technical and other intellectuals under the leadership of the proletariat, and consolidated the community of the peoples of the Soviet Union.

In recording these successes the Party Congress notes at the same time the *errors which have been committed as regards the collection of grain and of foreign trade*, which endangered the stability of the currency and brought about an adverse foreign trade balance, while a favourable trade balance is a precondition for further economic growth. The Party Congress approves the decisions adopted by the Central Committee in November for the rectification of these errors and instructs the Central Committee to strengthen the leadership of the economic commissariats in order to avoid such errors in the future.

The Party is now beginning to work under new international and domestic conditions. In the sphere of *foreign political relations* the maintenance and prolongation of the breathing space, which has become a period of so-called peaceable relations between the Soviet Union and the capitalist countries, is to be recorded, in spite of the fact that the antagonisms between these two camps are becoming not weaker but more acute. This breathing space furnished the possibility of *inner reconstruction* and, as a result of the economic relations with foreign countries, brings certain advantages tending to expedite this reconstruction. On the other hand, as a result of the strengthening of connections between the Soviet economy and world capitalism, the former's dependence upon the latter has increased, a fact which brings with it a number of fresh dangers which must be taken into account by the Party in the struggle for socialism and in securing the necessary economic independence of the Soviet country.

*Within the capitalist countries* there must be recorded a partial stabilisation of capitalism and a relative strengthening of the political power of the European bourgeoisie. The

role of the *United States of America* has increased enormously, and almost amounts to financial world hegemony. Further, there must be recorded: the gradual decline of the *British Empire* as a world power; the antagonisms between the victor and vanquished states; the antagonisms between Europe and America; an undermining of the whole system of imperialism on the part of the awakening colonial and semi-colonial peoples, whose movements in some places has assumed the form of a national war for freedom and has reached unexampled dimensions; and finally, the growth of new forms of the European labour movement, in close connection with the proletariat of the Soviet Union (fight for trade union unity, workers' delegations to the Soviet Union etc.).

The relative stabilisation of Europe and its "pacification" under the hegemony of Anglo-American capital has called into life a whole system of economic and political blocs, the last of which are the *Locarno Conference* and the *Guarantee Treaties* which are screened by the alleged pacifist *League of Nations* and by the false talk of disarmament of the *Second International*, for a fresh war. Against these blocs of the capitalist countries under Anglo-American hegemony, which are accompanied by an enormous increase in armaments and therefore bear within them fresh dangers of war, among them being the *danger of an anti-Soviet intervention*, there is growing the *rapprochement of the proletariat of the advanced countries to the proletariat of the Soviet Union* under the slogans of the fight for peace, against all new imperialist wars and against armed attacks on the Soviet Union.

Upon the basis of this estimation of the international situation the *Party Congress instructs the Central Committee to be guided in its policy by the following principles:*

1. To consolidate in every possible way the alliance of the proletariat of the Soviet Union, as the basis of world revolution, with the West European proletariat and the suppressed peoples, and to keep to the line of the development and the victory of the international proletarian revolution.

2. To conduct a peaceful policy, which shall stand in the centre of the entire foreign policy of the Soviet government and underlie all its international actions.

3. To carry on the work of economic construction from such a point of view that the Soviet Union is converted from a country which imports machines to a country which produces machines, in order that by this means the Soviet Union with its capitalist encirclement shall not become an economic appendage of the capitalist world economy, but an independent economic unit which is building up socialism and which, thanks to its economic construction, can become a powerful means for the revolutionising of the workers of all countries and of the suppressed peoples of the colonies and semi-colonies.

4. As far as possible, to accumulate economic reserves which can secure the country against all accidents affecting the domestic and the foreign markets.

5. To adopt every measure for strengthening the defensive forces of the country and for strengthening the Red Army and the Red Navy and Air Fleet.

In the sphere of *economic construction* the Party Congress adopts the Leninist standpoint, that "the Soviet country, as the country of the proletarian dictatorship, possess everything necessary in order to build up a complete socialist society." *The Party Congress considers the fight for the victory of socialist construction in the Soviet Union to be the chief task of the Party.* The period since the XIII Party Congress completely confirms the correctness of this principle. Already before the conquest of power by the proletariat of other countries, but with its unconditional support, without any so-called help on the part of foreign capital, and with uninterrupted struggle against private capital at home, the working class of the Soviet Union, in alliance with the main mass of the peasantry, has achieved the first important successes of socialist construction. The past year was marked by a *tremendously rapid development of the national economy in general*, which is approaching the pre-war standard, as well as by the growth of its various branches: industry, agriculture, transport, foreign and domestic trade, credit and banking system, state finances, etc. Within the national economy of the Soviet Union, which consists of various

economic forms (natural peasant economy, small production of commodities, private capitalism, state capitalism and socialism), *the importance of socialist industry, of state and co-operative trade, of nationalised credits and other positions of power of the proletarian state is rapidly increasing*. In this manner there is to be seen the economic advance of the proletariat on the basis of the New Economic Policy and the advance of the economic system of the Soviet Union in the direction of socialism. The socialist state industry is becoming more and more the advanced guard of national economy, which is drawing along with it the entire national economy.

The Party Congress emphasises that these successes could not have been attained without the active participation of the broad working masses in the general work of construction of the socialist industry (campaigns for raising the productivity of labour, workshop meetings etc.)

At the same time, however, there is developing the particular *contradictions of this growth and the specific dangers and difficulties* which are determined by this growth. Among these are: the absolute growth of private capital, with the relative sinking of its role; the special role of private capital, which conducts its business in the village; the growth of kulak economy in the village along with the growth of the differentiation of classes in the village; the growth of a new bourgeoisie in the towns, which is attempting to ally itself economically with the trading capitalists and kulaks to fight for the subjugation of the main masses of the middle peasantry.

In view of all these facts *the Party Congress instructs the Central Committee to be guided by the following principles in the sphere of economic policy*:

1. The chief attention must be devoted to the task of securing in every way the victory of socialist economic forms over private capital, the strengthening of the monopoly of foreign trade, of the growth of socialist state industry and, under the leadership and with the help of the co-operatives, to draw the largest possible number of peasant undertakings into the work of socialist construction.

2. To secure the economic independence of the Soviet Union, which preserves the Soviet Union from becoming an appendage of capitalist world economy, and for this purpose to follow the course of industrialising the country and developing the production of the means of production and the creation of reserves for economic manoeuvring.

3. On the basis of the resolutions of the XIV Party Conference, efforts must be made to increase the growth of production and the exchange of goods in the country.

4. All sources of revenues are to make use of the strictest economy to be observed in the expenditure of state resources, and the pace of development of state industry, of commerce and the co-operatives to be speeded up for the purpose of increasing the rate of socialist accumulation.

5. To develop our socialist industry on the bases of a higher technical standard, but nevertheless strictly according to the absorbing capacity of the market, as well as of the financial possibilities of the state.

6. To support in every way the development of the Soviet industry to the provinces, by stimulating the initiative of the provincial authorities with regard to organising those industries which are devoted to satisfying the various requirements of the population in general and of the peasantry in particular.

7. To support and promote agriculture in the direction of increasing agricultural knowledge, developing technical culture, raising agricultural technology (providing tractors) industrialisation of agriculture, regulating the holding of land, and in the direction of an all-round support of the most varied forms of collective agriculture.

The Party Congress is of the opinion that one of the most imperative conditions for the solution of these questions, *is the fight against the disbelief in the construction of socialism in our country, as well as against the attempts to regard our undertakings—the undertakings of the consistent-socialist type (Lenin)—as state capitalist undertakings*. Such ideological



tendencies, which render impossible the conscious attitude of the masses to the building up of socialism in general, and to the building up of socialist industry in particular, are only calculated to hinder the growth of the socialist elements of our economy and to facilitate the struggle of private capital against them. The Party Congress, therefore, considers necessary an extended educational work for the purpose of overcoming these deviations from Leninism.

As regards the *relations among classes*, the Party Congress notes the following basic phenomena, which are determined by the economic development of the Soviet Union: growth of the industrial proletariat; strengthening of the rich peasants in the village; growth of the new bourgeoisie in the town; growth of the activity of all classes and groups in our country. One of the basic forms of the class struggle is at present the struggle between the capitalist and socialist elements in our economy, *the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat for the purpose of winning the main masses of the peasantry*. This struggle finds its political expression mainly in the attempts of the kulak elements of the village to capture the middle peasants and thereby subjugate the soviets to their influence.

If the village poor, and most of all the agricultural workers, are the support of the proletariat in the village, then the middle peasant is and must be the firm ally of the proletariat. It must not for a moment be forgotten that, as a result of the expropriation of the big landowners and the handing over of the big landed estates to the peasantry, and in consequence of the policy of the committees of the village poor and the anti-kulak policy in the village, and finally, as a result of prohibiting the land being bought and sold (nationalisation of the land), the middle peasantry have become exceedingly strong and that those sections, in spite of the differentiation process, now form the main mass of the peasantry. Without having these masses as firm allies or by merely keeping these sections neutral, now, after the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship, it will be impossible to build up socialism. For the chief means for the construction of socialism in the village consists in the growing economic leadership on the part of the socialist state industry, in the state credit institutions and in other dominating positions which are in the hands of the proletariat, in drawing the main masses of the peasantry into the co-operative organisation, and in securing the socialist development of this organisation by making use of, overcoming, and pushing out its capitalist elements. Every underestimation of the middle peasantry, the failure to understand its very important and special role, the attempt to divert the Party from the slogan of a firm alliance with it and to go over to the obsolete slogan of neutralizing it, to the "fear of the middle peasantry," *leads therefore to the destruction of the dictatorship of the proletariat; for this would mean the destruction of the workers' and peasants' bloc.*

The struggle against the kulaks must be conducted by organising the village poor against the kulaks, as well as by consolidating the alliance of the proletariat and the village poor with the middle peasants for the purpose of separating the middle peasants from the kulaks and isolating the kulaks.

The failure to understand the great importance of the struggle in these two directions is bound up with two deviations from the correct line of the Party, which was defined by the XIV Party Conference meeting and the October plenum of the Central Committee. The Party Congress emphatically condemns the deviation which consists in the underestimation of the differentiation in the village, which overlooks the dangers connected with the growth of the kulaks and the various forms of capitalist exploitation, which does not wish to understand the urgent necessity of pushing back the kulaks and curbing their greed for exploitation, which does not recognise the duty of the Party of the proletariat to organise and to rally the village poor and the agricultural labourers in the fight against the kulaks.

But the Party Congress at the same time likewise emphatically condemns the attempt to obscure the fundamental question of Communist policy in the village, the question of the struggle for the middle peasant as the central figure of agriculture and the question of

co-operation as the fundamental organizational form of the movement of the village to socialism.

The Party Congress especially emphasises the necessity of the struggle against this last-named deviation. In view of the relative greater preparation of the Party for the immediate fight against the village profiteers, and the possibility of overcoming the first deviation, the overcoming of the second deviation represents a much more difficult task. This demands more complicated methods of fighting, by combining the methods of political isolation of the kulaks with the methods of drawing the masses of the peasantry into the orbit of socialist construction. This is all the more so because, with the present conditions, this second deviation threatens to return to the policy of fighting the kulaks by the methods of War Communism and the abandonment of the present party line in the village, which has proved its correctness by important political successes, and also the abandonment of the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, that is, with the abandonment of our entire work of construction.

The Party Congress *fully approves the decisions of the XIV Party Conference on the peasant question* (including among these those regarding the extension of the tenants law, the right to hire labour, regarding assistance for handicraft industry and the transition from the system of administrative pressure to economic competition and economic struggle, as well as regards the revival of the soviets, etc.) *which aim at a further improvement of the policy of the Party along the line of consolidating the alliance between the working class and the peasantry.* The Party Conference declares that this change in the Party policy, which arises from the change in class relations, radically improved the situation in the village, raised the authority of the proletariat and its Party among the peasantry, and created a firm basis for broad organisational work for the purpose of drawing the peasantry into the work of socialist construction.

The Party Congress at the same time *fully approves the decisions of the October plenum of the Central Committee regarding work among the village poor.* Only to the extent to which the increase of the productive forces in the village (under the present conditions of the increased activity of all class groupings) is accompanied by the organisation of the landless peasants and the agricultural workers can the appropriate exchange of relations of the class forces and the leadership of the industrial proletariat be guaranteed.

The Party Congress, in approving the decisions of the Central Committee regarding material assistance for the village poor and regarding the organising of groups of the village poor, emphasises that here there can be no talk either of returning to the village poor committees, or of returning to the system of pressure employed at the time of War Communism and to the practice of anti-kulakism, etc. It is a question of organising the village poor which, with the help of the Party and the state power in the struggle on the economic and political front (collective undertakings, artels, co-operatives, peasant committees, soviets), will overcome the remnants of the psychology of charitable relief, will follow the path of organised class resistance against the village profiteers, and must become a firm support of the proletarian policy in the fight for uniting the middle peasantry with the proletariat.

The Party Congress declares that *agricultural co-operatives*, both from the standpoint of their economic work as well as attracting the masses and correct socialist leadership, is far from fulfilling their great role. The Party Congress makes it incumbent on all members to pay the closest regard to developing the agricultural co-operatives and to adopt all measures to ensure their proper growth.

The *increased activity of the masses* together with the growing activity of all class groupings on the basis of the economic advance, is a factor of the greatest political importance. The proletariat and its Party must make use of this growth as the fundamental and leading social force for the purpose of attracting still larger masses into the process of

socialist construction on all fronts, and for the fight against the bureaucracy of the state apparatus.

In the *towns* the growth of the activity of the masses found its expression in the revival of the state soviets, of the trade unions, the workers' co-operatives, etc. In the *village* the increased poor found its expression in the revival of the soviets and of the co-operatives. The Party Congress once again emphasises that, under the present conditions, the dictatorship of the proletariat *cannot be consolidated by methods of War Communism and administrative pressure*, that the co-operatives cannot be built up except on the *voluntary principle* or without the elected organs *giving account* to their electors and without these organs having the confidence of the members, that the revival of the soviets and the increase of their connection with broad circles of the working population is a necessary prerequisite for all further work of the Party and of the Soviet power.

The revival of the village soviets and of the co-operatives, which provide scope for the initiative and activity of the peasantry, is a pre-condition, from the point of view of maintaining and consolidating the proletarian leadership, of the revival, the increased activity and consolidation of the proletarian organisations. Only under this condition can the proletarian dictatorship be consolidated and the implementation of a correct political line from the point of view of socialism be guaranteed. Hence arises in the first place the slogan of the revival of the trade unions, these proletarian mass organisations which must embrace the entire proletariat. Trade union democracy must be that method which facilitates the participation of the masses in common work, extends the possibilities of selecting new comrades for higher positions, renews the leading cadres of the trade union organisations, renders possible class solidarity and raises the class consciousness of the proletarian masses.

In order, accordingly, to carry through the entire work of reviving the mass organisations of the proletariat and of the peasantry, it is necessary that *the leading force of these organisations, i.e., the Russian Communist Party, in all its constituent parts, follows the path of consistent inner-party democracy. The Party Congress approves the November Manifesto of the plenum of the Central Committee regarding inner-party democracy*, and proposes to the party organisations that they consider in this respect the following tasks:

- a) Raising the activity of the broad party masses in the discussion and solution of the most important questions of party policy.
- b) Consistent observation of eligibility of the leading party organs by attracting new forces to the work of leadership, extending the circle of active party workers and training fresh party cadres in order to help the old.
- c) Raising the qualification of party functionaries, especially raising their theoretical level.
- d) Spreading the principles of Leninist theory among the broadest party circles.

The consolidation of the Party and the strengthening of its leading role in all spheres of constructive work, which is more necessary than ever in the present complicated situation, is a prerequisite for the *correct regulation of the composition of the Party*. The Party Conference considers it necessary to conduct a policy in this sphere which aims at *raising the qualitative composition of the party organisations*, which strives to attract ever greater numbers of workers into the Party and constantly raise *the preponderance of its proletarian party core*. The Party Congress at the same time affirms the necessity of a strict implementation of the measures laid down for restricting admittance into the Party to only proletarian elements, *but rejects the policy which leads to an immoderate swelling of the party membership and to its being swamped with semi-proletarian elements which have not passed through any school of trade unions and of proletarian organisations*. The Party Congress condemns such attempts, which have nothing in common with Leninism, which deny the correct change of relations between the Party (advance Communist leadership).

The leading role of the Party can only be secured by absolute unity of will, by solidarity of the party cadres, by the maintenance and consolidation of Bolshevik proletarian discipline in the Party.

The Party Congress approves the policy of the Central Committee which aimed at not allowing an open discussion with some leaders of the *Leningrad* organisation and their individual supporters in the Central Committee and to removing the differences of opinion within the Party as well as securing the collective leadership of the Party.

The Party Congress instructs the Central Committee to conduct a determined fight against all attempts to create a breach in the Party, no matter from whence they may come and by whom they may be conducted. The Party Congress expresses the firm conviction that the Leningrad organisation will march in the first ranks of the fighters for the solidarity and the unity of our Leninist Party—a unity which must be maintained and strengthened at all costs.

The Party Congress welcomes the strengthening of the bonds between the proletariat of the Soviet Union and the proletariat of all countries. The Party Congress sees in this the growing influence of the Soviet Union as the point of support of the international labour movement. The Party Congress proposes to the Central Committee that it continues in the future to strengthen and to consolidate with all its powers the bonds of international solidarity, under whose banner was born the dictatorship of the proletariat and under the sign of which the proletariat fought for and strengthened its rule.

*International Press Correspondence*, V, No. 90 (31 December 1925), 1363-1366.



### THE ATTACK ON ZINOVIEV'S CONTROL OF THE LENINGRAD PARTY ORGANIZATION

28 December 1925

*The defeat of the Left Opposition at the Fourteenth Party Congress (see above) was followed by a quick move to destroy Zinoviev's control of the Leningrad Party Organization, the most significant local party organization still under the control of the opponents of the Stalin-Bukharin central leadership. Even before the Congress ended it adopted the following call to the Leningrad members to repudiate their local leadership. This was followed by a vigorous organizational campaign in Leningrad, directed by a number of Stalin's closest associates who went there for that purpose. It bore quick results. By the end of January Stalin's people had taken over all the major factory and local organizations and ousted Zinoviev's followers. The destruction of Zinoviev's major power base was completed in February, when he was removed from both his leadership of the Party there and his position as chairman of the Executive Committee of the Leningrad Soviet.*

#### **Appeal to all Members of the Leningrad Organization**

Comrades! The party Congress appeals to you in view of the completely incorrect behavior of the Leningrad delegation which at the Congress put forward its own co-reporter against the Central Committee and issued a special 'Declaration of the Leningrad Organization,' over the signature of Kamenev and others, which threatens to undermine our party's unity.

Your *conference* voted for *confidence* in the Central Committee and gave instructions to vote for this confidence at the Congress. Your *delegation* at the Congress voted *against confidence* in the Central Committee.

Your *conference* considered the party's *unity* to be essential. Your delegation voted *against* the whole Congress, placing itself in opposition to the party Congress.

All the Leningrad worker-communists agreed beforehand that it was necessary to march in step with their party. But the *Leningradskaja Pravda* has already launched a campaign against the decisions of the Congress, i.e., has launched a campaign aimed at *disrupting party unity*.

At the same time the Leningrad guberniia party committee prohibited the Vyborg district from meeting to express its solidarity with the whole party and its Congress, and justified this by references to party discipline. This decision of the guberniia committee is completely incorrect. It is in contradiction with the foundations of intra-party democracy. This decision, and the others which violate the elementary rights of party members and are in contradiction with intra-party democracy, must immediately be revoked by the guberniia committee.

The Congress calls upon all members of the Leningrad organization to end all such attempts at subverting the unity of our leninist party.

The opposition completely unmasked itself at the Congress. While the opposition leaders did not mention any disagreements with the Central Committee at the district conferences or even at the province party conference, but gathered votes under the banner of fidelity to the party leadership, at the Congress they appeared as a separate group, one in opposition to the Central Committee of our party.

Their assertion that the party is unaware of the kulak danger is untrue.

Their attempt to lessen the significance of the leninist slogan of the union of the proletariat and the village poor with the middle peasants, under the cover of a hue and cry about the kulak danger, is dangerous.

The assertion that the Congress did not accept the opposition amendments is untrue. The opposition did not submit an amendment but an ultimatum against which the Congress could hardly fail to object.

The Congress gave its own precise decision in the resolution adopted upon the proposal of the Moscow, Ural, Ukrainian (together with the Donbass), Tula, Ivanovo-Vosnesensk, and Nizhny Novgorod delegations. This decision (like the others) of the Congress is binding upon all party members. Discussion of Congress decisions cannot and should not be permitted. Any worker-communist can see that the resolution on the Central Committee's report is permeated with leninism from its first line to its last. Any worker-communist can see that it is permeated with great concern for party unity. For the sake of this unity the Congress was willing to soften certain formulations of the resolution. And your delegates voted against this resolution.

The XIV Congress hereby declares that any statement that the party wants to belittle the significance of the Leningrad organization is a slander against the party.

The XIV Congress does not doubt that the Leningrad organization, which has always been in the vanguard of the party's ranks, will succeed in correcting the errors committed by the Leningrad delegation.

Long live the Leningrad organization of the VKP(b)!

Long live the unity of the leninist party!

McNeal/Gregor, 266-67.



## RULES OF THE ALL-UNION COMMUNIST PARTY

31 December 1925

*The Fourteenth Party Congress revised the Party's rules, including changing its name from Russian Communist Party to All-Union Communist Party (which it retained until 1952, when the name was changed to Communist Party of the Soviet Union). The rules spelled out more carefully the procedures for admission to the Party, and made various other changes. It also made extensive changes in the rules as they pertained to the central and regional party organizations. The sections on the Control Commissions (whose role had been increased in importance), party organizations in the Red Army and party discipline also received extensive revision. See the glossary for the Russian political-geographical terms.*

## RULES OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

## I. Party Membership

1. Everyone who subscribes to the party program, works in one of its organizations, submits to party decisions and pays membership dues is considered a party member.

2. New members are accepted from among candidates who have passed a course in political grammar and have been candidates for an established period of time.

The order for the admission of candidates to party membership is as follows:

(a) There are three categories: (1) Workers and Red Army soldiers who come from the worker and peasant classes; (2) peasants (other than soldiers), private handicraftsmen who are not exploiting another's labor; (3) all others (office employees, and so forth).

The first category is divided into two groups:

To the first group belong the industrial workers who are permanently engaged in physical hired labor.

To the second group belong non-industrial workers, soldiers from the worker and peasant classes and hired hands in agriculture.

(b) For admission into the Party of persons belonging to the first group of the first category, it is necessary to have two recommendations of party members of one year's standing. For admission of persons belonging to the second group of the first category, two recommendations of members of two years' standing are required. For admission of persons belonging to the second category, three recommendations of members of three years' standing are required. For admission of persons belonging to the third category, five recommendations of party members of five years' standing are required.

NOTE: For admission to the party from the Komsomol [the Communist youth organization] in the first and second categories, a recommendation of a committee of that organization equals that of one party member.

(c) Persons who previously were members of some other party are accepted in exceptional cases on the recommendation of five party members of five years' standing, and then only through the occupational nucleus with a confirmation by the Central Committee being necessary, no matter what their social position.

NOTE: The Central Committee may give the right of final ratification of the admission of those who come from other parties to separate territorial party committees and to the central committees of national Communist parties.

(d) Recommendations must be verified by the local party committee before admission.

(e) The question of admission into the party is discussed first by the nucleus, then it is decided by a general meeting of the organization, and finally the admission enters into force upon ratification by a party committee; for the first category that of the uyez or raion committee (in cities and industrial centres); for the second and third categories that of the okrug or guberniia committee. In the present organizations of the cities the question of ad-

mission into the party is decided by a general meeting of party members. In the case of a city raion having more than 1,000 members and candidates, the admission is valid if passed on by the plenary meeting of the district committee without the sanction of a general meeting.

(f) Young people under 20 (with the exception of Red Army soldiers) are admitted to the Party only through the Komsomol.

3. Those who propose new members are responsible for the members recommended. In case of an unworthy recommendation they are subject to party discipline, even to the exclusion from the Party.

4. The Party seniority standing of candidates who are accepted for membership in the Party is calculated from the day of the ratification of their admission by the general meeting of the corresponding nucleus.

5. Every member of one organization going to work in the region of another is to be enrolled as a member of the latter.

NOTE: The transfer of party members from one organization to another is accomplished in conformity with the regulations of the Central Committee of the Party.

6. The questions of exclusion of any one from the Party is decided by the general meeting of the organization to which the particular person belongs and ratified by the gubernia (okrug) control commission, or it is decided directly by the guberniia (okrug) control commission in the first instance. The resolution of exclusion becomes valid only with the consent of the guberniia (okrug) committee. From the moment of exclusion by the general meeting or by the control commission, the person involved is removed from party work. Every case of exclusion must be published in the party papers, with a statement of the cause for exclusion.

## II. Candidate Members

7. All persons desiring to enter the Party must pass through a period during which they are candidates in order that they may become acquainted with the program and tactics of the Party and that their personal qualities may be verified.

8. The order for admission of a person as candidate follows exactly the same procedure as for acceptance into the Party (division into categories, character of recommendations and their verification, the decision of the organization concerning admission and the ratification by the party committee).

9. The regular term for candidacy is as follows: For the first category not less than six months, for the second category not less than one year, and for the third category not less than two years.

NOTE: Persons previously belonging to other parties, no matter what their social position, must first be candidates for two years.

10. Candidates may take part in the deliberations at open meetings of the organization to which they belong, but are not entitled to vote.

11. Candidates must pay the usual membership dues to the local party committee.

## III. The Organizational Structure of the Party

12. The guiding principle of the organizational structure of the party is democratic centralism.

13. The party is built upon the foundation of democratic centralism according to territorial authority. The organization serving any given region is considered supreme in relation to all organizations serving but a part of that region.

14. All party organizations are autonomous in deciding local questions.

15. The supreme directing organ of every organization is the general meeting, conference or congress.

16. The general meeting, conference or congress elects a committee, which is its executive organ and administers all the current work of the local organization.

17. The scheme of party organizations is as follows:

(a) The territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

—The All-Union Congress.

—The Central Committee.

(b) Oblast, republics, guberniia:

—Oblast/krai conferences, congresses of the republic Communist parties, guberniia conferences.

—Oblast/krai committees, gubernia committees.

(c) Okrug, uезд:

—okrug/uezd conferences.

—okrug/uezd committees.

(d) Volost, raions:

—volost/raion conferences.

—volost/raion committees.

(e) Enterprises, villages, Red Army units, institutions:

—General meetings of nuclei.

—Bureaus of the nuclei.

18. The order of subordination, rendering of accounts, adopting and disputing of all party decisions, from the supreme body to the lowest, is the following: the All-Union Congress, the Central Committee, the oblast/krai conferences, the oblast/krai committee, conferences of republic Communist parties, guberniia conferences, and so forth.

19. For special forms of party work there are special sections. These sections are attached to committees to which they are directly subordinated. The procedure of organizing such sections is determined by special instructions of the Central Committee.

20. Every organization, after being finally confirmed, has the right to have its own seal, but only with the sanction of the proper higher party organizations.

#### IV. Central Party Institutions

21. The supreme organ of the Party is the Congress. Regular congresses are convened every year. Extraordinary congresses are convened by the Central Committee on its own initiative or on the demand of not less than one-third of the total number of members represented at the last party congress. The call for party congresses, as well as their programs, must be announced not later than one and one-half months before the opening of the congress. An extraordinary congress is convened two months after it is announced.

The congress is considered lawful if there are in attendance not less than one-half of all the party members represented at the last regular congress.

The rules for representation at party congresses are fixed by the Central Committee.

22. In case the extraordinary congress is not called by the Central Committee, as set forth in Article 21, the organizations demanding it have the right to form an organizing committee which has the rights of the Central Committee in convening the congress.

23. The congress (a) hears and ratifies the reports of the Central Committee, the Central Control Commission, Central Revision Commission and other central institutions; (b) reviews and revises the program and statutes of the Party; (c) determines the tactical line of the Party in regard to current questions; (d) elects a Central Committee, a Central Control Commission, a Central Revision Commission, and so forth.

24. The composition of the Central Committee is established by the congress. In case of vacancies in the Central Committee their places are taken by alternates elected by the congress according to rules established by it.



25. In the interval between congresses the Central Committee directs the entire work of the Party, represents the Party in its relations with other parties, organizations and institutions, organizes various party institutions and directs their activities, names the editors of the central organs, which are working under its control, confirms the editors of party organs of large local organizations, organizes and conducts those undertakings having public significance, distributes the personnel and the finances of the Party and supervises the central treasury.

Through the various party sections the Central Committee directs the work of central, soviet and public organizations.

The Central Committee must have not less than one plenary meeting (open to all its members) every two months.

Candidate members of the Central Committee can take part in these meetings with the right of a consultant voice.

26. The Central Committee organizes for political work a Politburo, for general administrative organization work an Orgburo, and for the current work of organization and execution a Secretariat.

27. Once in the interval between party congresses the Central Committee convenes an All-Union Party Conference of representatives of local party organizations.

28. The Central Committee must regularly inform the party organizations of its work.

29. The number of members elected to the Central Control Commission is established by the party congress.

30. The number elected to the Central Revision Committee is fixed by the party congress, but all members must be of at least ten years' party standing.

The Central Revision Commission oversees: (a) The speed and proper procedure of handling matters in the central party organs and the proper organization of the apparatus of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party; (b) the treasury and the undertakings of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party.

#### V. The Oblast or Krai Organizations

31. Party organizations, with the permission of the Central Committee, may unite into regional unions. The borders of a oblast (krai) are fixed by the oblast (krai) conferences and are confirmed by the Central Committee.

32. Party organizations serving the territory of national republics and autonomous areas of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic are on the same plane as oblast (guberniia) party organizations; i.e., they are entirely subordinate to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party.

33. The committee (or the central committee of a national Communist party) is elected at the oblast (krai) conference (or at the congress of the national Communist party).

NOTE: Presidia or bureaus of territorial committees, as well as committees of equal standing, are to be ratified by the central committee of the All-Union Communist Party.

34. According to a special decision of the Central Committee, in places where there are regional economic organs (economic soviets and so forth), or in regions distant from the centre, special oblast bureaus shall be established and appointed by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, which also determines the number of members.

Oblast bureaus of the central committee are responsible only to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party.

35. The periodical oblast (krai) conference (or congress of the national Communist party) is convened by the oblast (krai committee (or central committee of a national Communist party) once a year; the extraordinary conference is convened according to the decision of the oblast (krai) committee (or central committee of a national Communist party)

or on demand of one-third of the whole number of members of organizations included in the oblast (krai).

The rules regarding representatives at the oblast (krai) conference (or congress of a national Communist party) are fixed by the committee (or central committee of a national Communist party).

The oblast (krai) conference (or congress of a national Communist party) hears and ratifies reports of the oblast (krai) committee (or central committee of a national Communist party), of the control commission, the revision commission and other oblast (krai) institutions; discusses questions concerning the Party, soviet, trade union and economic work in its particular oblast (krai) or republic, and elects the committee as well as the oblast (krai) control and revision commissions (or central committee, central control commission, central revision commission of a national Communist party).

36. The oblast (krai) committee elects from its membership a bureau of not less than five persons for its current work.

The oblast (krai) committee (or central committee of a national Communist party) organizes various party institutions within its territory, directs their activity, appoints the editor of the oblast (krai) party organ, which works under its control, directs and manages all the party enterprises having a general importance of the oblast (krai), distributes within the limits of the particular oblast (krai) the personnel and appropriations of the Party and superintends the oblast (krai) party treasury. The oblast (krai) committee or central committee of a national Communist party directs through party groups the activity of the organs of the soviets, trade unions, cooperatives and other organizations; it also directs the work of the komсомol and presents detailed reports of its activities at the time and in the form fixed by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party.

A plenary meeting of the oblast (krai) committee (or the central committee of a national Communist party) is convened not less than once in two months.

## VI. The Guberniia Organizations

37. The regular guberniia party conference is convened by the guberniia committee at least once a year. Extraordinary conferences are convened by decision of the guberniia committee or by one-third of the entire number of members of organizations within the guberniia. Guberniia conferences hear and ratify the reports of the guberniia committees, of the control commission, the revision commission and other guberniia institutions. They discuss questions concerning the Party, soviet, economic and trade union work in that particular guberniia, elect the guberniia committee, the guberniia control and revision commissions and delegates to the All-Union Congress.

38. The guberniia committee is elected by the conference; the committee must include workers of the chief city, as well as other large industrial centres of that particular guberniia.

The guberniia committee is convened at least once a month. This same committee appoints out of its number not less than five persons to make up a bureau to do its current work. Of these not less than three must be detailed for party work only.

The secretary of a guberniia committee must have had at least seven years' party standing and must have been confirmed by a higher party centre (only with the authorization of this latter body may the party standing be lowered).

39. The guberniia committee confirms all the country and precinct organizations of its own area, with the sanction of the oblast (krai) committees or the Central Committee, organizes various party institutions within its own area, directs their activities, appoints the editor of the guberniia organ working under its control, organizes all its enterprises of guberniia scope, distributes within the guberniia the personnel and the financial resources of the Party and has charge of the guberniia treasury.

The guberniia committee directs through its factions the activity of soviets, trade unions, cooperative unions and other organizations, and directly supervises the work of the komsomol. The guberniia committee presents reports to the Central Committee of all its activity at such times and in such form as is decreed by the Central Committee. Oblast committees of autonomous republics and of autonomous areas are on an equality with guberniia committees.

40. In periods between conferences, guberniia committee periodically furnish informational reports to the general meeting or conference of city uezd organizations. Moreover, they have to convene enlarged plenary meetings or guberniia conferences of the representatives of the uezd committees and raion committees (which are directly subordinate to the guberniia committees).

41. In chief guberniia cities raion organizations with the rights of uezd organizations are established if necessary; they are directly subordinate to the guberniia committee.

### VII. The Okrug Organizations

42. The okrug party conference is called by the okrug party committee at least once a year. An extraordinary conference is called upon the decision of the okrug committee or according to the decision of one-third of the total number of organizations included in the okrug.

The okrug conference hears and ratifies reports of the district committee, of the control and revision commissions and other okrug institutions, elects the okrug committee, the control and revisions commissions and delegates to the All-Union Party Congress.

43. Among the members of the okrug committee elected by the conference must be included workers of the chief okrug city, as well as of other large industrial centres of the okrug.

44. The okrug committee must be called at least once a month. The okrug committee appoints from its members a bureau of not less than five members to carry on the current work. Of these not less than three persons must be appointed exclusively for party work.

The secretary of the okrug committee must have five years' party standing, and his appointment must be ratified by a higher party body (only with the assent of the latter can a person of less party standing be appointed).

45. The okrug committee confirms raion organizations and party nuclei. Raion organizations must afterward be ratified by the oblast (krai) committee or by the central various party institutions within the limits of the okrug and directs their activities and appoints the editor of the okrug party organ working under its direction and control. It organizes all the enterprises of okrug scope, distributes within its borders the personnel and appropriations of the Party and superintends the okrug treasury. The okrug committee directs, through the appropriate factions, the activity of soviets, trade unions, cooperatives and other bodies and directly guides the work of the komsomol. The okrug committee submits reports to the oblast (krai) committee (or to the central committee of a national Communist party) of all its activities at such time and in such form as is decreed by the Central Committee.

46. In periods between conferences the okrug committee periodically submits reports to the general meetings or conferences of city or raion organizations. Moreover, the okrug committee is to convene enlarged plenary meetings or okrug conferences of representatives of raion committees and large nuclei (which are directly subordinate to the okrug committee).

47. In large district cities there may be created, with the authorization of the higher party committee, organizations the same way as raion committees of the chief guberniia.

### VIII. The Uezd Organizations

48. The uezd conference hears and ratifies the reports made by the uezd committee, revision commission and the representative of the guberniia control commission and discusses questions of party, soviet, economic and trade union activity of the uezd. It elects

a committee, a revision commission and delegates to the guberniia conference. The conference is convened once in six months.

49. The uezd committee is elected by the conferences. The uezd committee appoints from its membership a bureau consisting of not more than five to seven persons. Out of that number at least three workers must be freed from any activity except party work.

The secretary of the uezd committee must have three years' party standing, and his nomination must be ratified by a higher party organ (the party standing of the secretary may be lowered only with the authorization of the latter).

50. The uezd committee ratifies volost and raion organizations and the nuclei in the uezd subject to approval of the guberniia committee. It organizes various party institutions within its territory, directs their activities, organizes all enterprises having uezd importance, convenes conferences of representatives and the volost nuclei and superintends the uezd treasury of the Party.

NOTE: The uezd party committee is entitled to publish party literature and a party paper only with the authorization of the guberniia committee.

51. The uezd committee directs, through party factions, the work of the uezd executive committee, as well as that of trade union organizations, cooperatives and other bodies of its own uezd. It directs also the whole work of the komsomol.

#### IX. The Volost and Raion Organizations

52. The supreme organ in the volost is the general meeting of the members of the Party in that volost.

NOTE: In large volost/raion where the convocation of a general meeting of all the members presents difficulties it is permissible to substitute the volost/raion conference for a general meeting. These conferences are convened at least once in three months.

53. General volost/raion meetings are convened at least once a month. The general meeting (a) decides questions regarding the admission and exclusion of party members, subject to ratification by the next higher party committee; (b) discusses and ratifies the report of the volost/raion committee; (c) elects the volost/raion committee; (d) elects the delegates for the uezd and other conferences, and (e) discusses and ratifies the reports of the faction of the executive committee.

54. The volost/raion committee is elected by the volost/raion party meeting or conference for a period of six months.

Secretaries of the volost committees must have at least a year's party standing.

NOTE: In volosts where there are less than three rural nuclei the volost committee is not organized. In that case the uezd committee has the right to require the nuclei of the volost centers of those volosts to execute some of the duties of the volost organizations.

55. The volost (economic district) committee is convened at least once every two weeks.

56. The volost/raion committee directs the work of all the organizations in the volost/raion. It registers all the party members, organizes the distribution of literature, arranges for meetings, lectures, and so forth. It organizes new nuclei and presents them to the uezd (or okrug) committee for ratification, superintends the party treasury and once each month sends a report of its activities to the uezd (or okrug) committee. It also directs, through the party faction, the work of the executive committee.

#### X. The Party Nuclei (Cells)

57. The base of the party organization is the party nucleus. A nucleus is confirmed by a okrug, uezd or raion committee and must include not less than three party members.

58. In large enterprises, having a large number of workers, section nuclei may be organized always within the general factory nucleus which includes the entire enterprise.

They may be organized in every case only with the authorization of the okrug, uezd or raion committee.

59. Nuclei are organizations which join the worker and peasant masses with the directive organ of one particular place. The duties of a nucleus are (1) to carry the party rallying cries and decisions to the masses; (2) to recruit and educate new members; (3) to assist local committees in their organizing and propaganda work, and (4) to participate actively as a party organ in the economic and political life of the country.

60. For carrying on its current work the nucleus elects a bureau for six months.

The secretary of a nucleus must have at least one year's party standing. Exceptions to this rule are permissible only with the assent of the okrug (or uezd) or raion committee (in cities).

### XI. The Control Commissions

61. For the purpose of assisting the Party in consolidating the unity and authority of the All-Union Communist Party, for recruiting the best part of the labor class for the Party and to struggle against violations of the Communist program and Constitution by members, as well as for the purpose of carrying through the party program in every respect in the activities of soviet organs and for the purpose of working out measures for improving and simplifying the soviet and economic apparatus control commissions are elected at the general party congress, as well as at oblast, krai, guberniia and okrug conferences, which submit reports about their activities to the organs by which they were elected.

NOTE: Okrug control commissions are organized with the authorization of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party.

62. The decisions of the control commissions cannot be annulled by corresponding party committees; but in order to be valid they must be accepted by the latter, by which they are also put into effect.

In case of dissent the question is submitted to a joint meeting. In case an agreement with the committee cannot be reached the question is submitted for decision to a corresponding party conference or to the higher control commission or to the party congress.

#### A. The Central Control Commission

The Central Control Commission is to be elected preferably from peasants and workers who have had the necessary party, soviet, economic or industrial experience. Members of the Central Control Commission named for work in the central organ of the Central Control Commission or in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection must have at least ten years' party standing. Members of the Central Control Commission working in local organs must have at least seven years' party standing; factory workers, as well as peasants, must have at least five years' party standing.

64. Members of the Central Control Commission cannot be at the same time members of the Central Committee and can not occupy an administrative or economic position.

NOTE: Exceptions are permitted in each case on the special authorization of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party and of the presidium of the Central Control Commission.

65. A plenary meeting of the Central Control Commission is convened once in three months. For the administration of all current work during the period between these meetings the Central Control Commission selects a presidium, consisting of twenty-one members, nine alternates and its executive organ, a secretariat. It also selects a party collegium of the Central Control Commission, which is responsible for reviewing matters concerned with the violation of party ethics, the Constitution and the program of the All-Union Communist Party.

66. Members of the Central Control Commission participate in All-Union Party Congresses, in conferences of national Communist parties, in oblast, krai, guberniia, okrug,

uezd and other conferences, meetings and assemblies, with the right of a consultant voice. At the plenary meetings of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party only members and candidate members of the presidium of the Central Control Commission can participate. When a joint plenary meeting of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission is called, the members of the Central Control Commission take part with the right of a full vote.

The presidium of the Central Control Commission delegates three members and three alternates to take part in the Political Bureau of the Central Committee and five members and five alternates to take part in the meetings of the Organizational Bureau and of the Secretariat of the Central Committee, with the right of a consultant voice.

67. The Central Control Commission has the right to assign tasks within the limits of its jurisdiction to all the members of the Party and party organizations.

#### B. The Control Commissions of National Communist Parties of Oblast (krai), Guberniia and Okrug Organizations

68. The number of members and candidates for the central control commission of national Communist parties, of oblast (krai), guberniia and okrug control commissions is fixed by the Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party, according to the strength of the organization, the economics of the region and other peculiarities.

Members and candidates of control commissions are to be elected preferably from workers and peasants who have been the most loyal in their party relationships. In the case of central control commissions of a national Communist party or of the oblast (krai) control commissions, the members must have at least seven years' party standing; in other control commissions, five years' party standing; all must have had an adequate knowledge of party, soviet and trade union work, so that they understand how to conduct effectively party and soviet control.

NOTE: Exceptions are allowed with the permission of the presidium of the Central Control Commission, as well as of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party.

69. Members of the control commission cannot be at one and the same time be members of party committees and they cannot occupy any responsible administrative position.

NOTE: Exceptions are allowed with the permission of the Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party.

70. The plenum of the control commission elects a presidium and party collegium and proposes the members of the collegium of the workers' and peasants' inspection.

71. Members of the control commission and alternates participate in meetings of the corresponding plenum of the party committee, in party conferences and sittings, within the limits of their organization, with the right of a consultant voice.

The presidium of the control commission sends a part of its members to take part in the meetings of corresponding bureaus of the party committees with the right of a consultant voice.

72. In cases of disagreement between the decisions of the control commission and the party committee, the two bodies meet in joint session. If agreement is not reached, in the case of the central control commission of a national Communist party or in the case of the oblast (krai) or guberniia control commission when the latter is not subordinate to a central control commission of a national Communist party or to a oblast (krai) control committee, the question goes to the Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party; for guberniia and oblast control commissions, subordinate to the central control commission of a national Communist party or to a krai control commission, the matter goes to the corresponding central control commission of a national Communist party or to the oblast (krai) control commission.

73. The control commission is entitled to assigns tasks within the limits of its jurisdiction to all the members of the Party and to all party organizations.

### C. The Representatives of the Control Commissions

74. In order to realize a direct and living relationship between the organs of the control commissions and the lower party organizations, as well as the large working and peasant masses, a body of representatives of the control commission in the okrug and uезд party organizations is created.

75. The representatives of the control commission are to be named by the okrug or uезд party conferences preferably from the workers and peasants who are the most consistent party workers, have at least five years' party standing and are ratified by the corresponding control commission.

NOTE: It is desirable that the representatives should be named from members of the control commission.

76. In those raions which are considered as the largest and most important from the political and economic point of view, the representatives of the control commission are freed from all other work except that of the Party. In all other raions they can hold other offices simultaneously.

77. The representatives of the control commission have the right to take part in the meetings of the corresponding party committees, conferences, meetings and deliberations of control commissions, with the right of a consultant voice.

### XII. The Party Organizations in the Red Army

78. The general administration of the party work in the Red Army and Red Navy is done in the political department of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army as the military department of the Central Committee. The political department of the Red Army carries on its work through specially appointed political sections (of fronts, army districts, navies, armies, divisions), army commissars and party commissions elected at the corresponding army conferences.

The nuclei and party collectives (meetings of party members who work together) in the Red Army and Navy work on the basis of special instructions confirmed by the Central Committee.

79. The chiefs of political departments of the military districts, navies and armies must have had seven years' party standing and the chiefs of political departments of divisions and brigades, four years' party standing.

80. Party commissions decide on questions of admission and exclusion of party members and candidates and watch for violations of the program and articles of the Party. Members of the commission must have had five years' party standing.

81. The appointment and transfer of party members and candidates of the Red Army and Navy belong to corresponding political organs.

The regular course for reaching agreement with party organs as to the transfer of leading party workers within the army (commanding and political personnel) is fixed by the instructions of the Central Committee.

82. Political organs are obliged to be in constant communication with the local party committee by means of constant participation in the local party committees by all the leaders of the political organs and the army commissars, as well as by having systematic reports made to the party committees by the heads of the political organs and army commissars about the political work in the various units. The direction of the work of party commissions as to the admission of candidates, advancement to party membership, the struggle against the violation of the party rules is carried on by local party committees and control commissions, by systematic hearing of reports about the organization of the work in the division and district party commissions and by giving them proper direction.

### XIII. Party Discipline

83. The strongest party discipline is the first obligation of all party members and all party organizations. Decisions of the party centres must be fulfilled immediately and accurately. There is to be complete freedom for the discussion of all controversial questions within the Party until a decision has been reached.

84. The non-fulfillment of decisions of higher organizations and other offences, recognized as criminal by the public opinion of the Party, entail the following judgments: In the case of an organization—censure; the appointment of a temporary supervisory committee, and a general re-registration of the membership (dissolution of the organization). In the case of single members of the Party, the judgments are: some method of censure (reproof, reprimand, and so forth), public censure, temporary exclusion from responsible party and soviet work, exclusion from the Party, exclusion from the Party with communication of his offense to the administrative and judicial authorities. Transfer to standing of candidate member as a party penalty is not allowed.

85. Delinquencies against discipline are discussed at the general meetings and by the control commissions and according to the usual procedure and in the established order of jurisdiction.

### XIV. The Financial Resources of the Party

86. The financial resources of the organization consist of membership dues, subsidies of the higher party organizations and other receipts.

87. Membership dues for party members and applicants on probation are fixed at not less than one-half of 1 per cent of their wages. There are four categories of membership dues, depending upon the size of the salary. The first category pays one-half of 1 per cent, and second 1 per cent, the third 2 per cent and the fourth 3 per cent.

88. Membership dues for those who receive an indefinite income, as, for instance, peasants, are fixed by local provincial committee.

89. The unemployed are completely freed from membership dues. The same refers to those who receive pensions (invalids and the aged).

90. There is a special entrance fee of 3 per cent of the (monthly) wages for those who become candidate members, from which no one can be excused.

91. Party members and candidates who have failed to pay their dues for three months without good cause are considered to have left the Party. A report should be made of this to the general meeting.

92. The rules for collecting membership dues and party deductions are fixed by special instructions.

### XV. Factions in Non-Party Organizations

93. In all congresses, conferences and elective organs (soviet, trade union, cooperative, and so forth), in which there are at least three members of the Party, there shall be organized factions, the purpose of which is generally to strengthen the influence of the Party, to carry on its policy among the non-party people and to bring under party control the work of all the above-mentioned institutions and organizations.

For the current work of the faction a bureau can be elected.

94. Whenever the party committee discusses questions related to a faction, constituted within an organization, the latter is entitled to send its representatives to the meeting, with the right of a consultant voice.

95. Factions, no matter what their significance, are completely subordinate to the corresponding party organizations. On all questions on which there exist lawful decisions of



95. Factions, no matter what their significance, are completely subordinate to the corresponding party organizations. On all questions on which there exist lawful decisions of corresponding party organizations, factions are strictly obliged to comply with these decisions. The committee has the right to remove or to send into the faction any member it desires, but it must let the faction know its motives for doing so, and the recall and introduction of the new member must be in keeping with the Constitution and the regulations of the non-party organ in connection with which the faction works. The faction has autonomy on questions of its own internal affairs and current work.

In case there is an essential disagreement between the party committee and the faction concerning some question which is within the jurisdiction of the latter, the committee is obliged to discuss the question a second time with the representatives of the faction and to adopt a final decision which must be carried out at once by the faction.

96. For all more important positions within the organizations in which the faction is working, candidates shall be proposed by the faction, together with the corresponding party organization. The same applies to the transfer of individuals from one position to another.

97. All questions having a political importance and which must be discussed by the faction must be discussed in the presence of representatives of the committee.

98. Questions which have to be decided in the non-party organization in which the faction is working and which involve matters of principle, as well as all questions which necessitate a concerted action of the Communists, must be considered first in a general meeting or in the bureau of the faction.

99. On every question which was decided in the faction of any non-party organization, all the members of the faction are obliged to vote solidly together in the general meeting of the organization in question. Those who violate this rule are subject to disciplinary measures, applied in the regular order in accordance with the Constitution.

100. Factions constituted in non-party organizations must not be in direct communication with factions of any lower organs. In case any faction finds it necessary to carry out its decision through the party channels, this must be done through the intermediary of the corresponding party committee (with the written authorization of the secretary of the committee and one member of the bureau of the faction).

Batsell, 735-754, with revisions.



## DOCUMENTS BY MAIN TOPICS

Communist International	383	Military Affairs	384
Economic Policies, Industry, Industrial Workers	383	Nationalities	384
Education, Culture, Arts, Cultural Policy	383	Politics and Political Contro- versies, The Communist Party	384
Foreign Policy and International Relations	384	Religious Issues	385
Law Codes and Legal Issues	384	Women, Youth, Social Issues, Conditions of Life	385

### COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The "Zinoviev Letter" and Relations with Great Britain. 24 October 1924	205
Rakovsky Denounces the "Zinoviev Letter." 25 October 1924	208
Stalin on the International Situation and the Tasks of the Communist Parties. 22 March 1925	305

### ECONOMIC POLICIES, INDUSTRY, INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

The Famine: Resolution of Appreciation for the American Relief Administration. 10 July 1923	53
The Immediate Tasks of Economic Policy. 24 December 1923	107
An Opposition Critique of the Party's Economic Policy. 29 December 1923	131
Preobrazhensky, The Law of Primitive Socialist Accumulation. November 1924	250
Bukharin on the Economic Controversy and the Defense of NEP. 12 December 1924	257
Control Figures for the Soviet Economy, 1925–1926. October 1925	320

### EDUCATION, CULTURE, ARTS, CULTURAL POLICY

The Theatrical Situation in Soviet Russia—An Assessment by Lunacharsky. 1923	1
Club and Factory Theaters. 1923	3
The Best Soviet Teachers. April–June, 1923	42
A Public Disputation of Futurism and the Arts. July 1923	51
Trotsky on Culture and Problems of Life. 10 July 1923	54
Habits and Custom. 11 July 1923	60
"Vodka, the Church and the Cinema." 12 July 1923	64
The Party on Press and Literature. 31 May 1924	189
Trotsky, Literature and Revolution. 29 July 1924	194
An Approved List of Proletarian Literature. January 1925	284
The Central Committee Resolution on Literature. 18 June 1925	308

**FOREIGN POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

American Refusal to Recognize the Soviet Government. 6–18 December 1923	89
Rakovsky's Speech at the Opening of the Anglo-Soviet Conference. 14 April 1924	159
Agreement Between China and the U.S.S.R. 31 May 1924	183
Agreement between the U.S.S.R. and the Autonomous Government of the Three Eastern Provinces of China. 20 September 1924	200
Statement by Karakhan Regarding the Return of the Chinese-Eastern Railroad to the Soviet Union. 5 October 1924	204
The "Zinoviev Letter" and Relations with Great Britain. 24 October 1924	205
Rakovsky Denounces the "Zinoviev Letter." 25 October 1924	208
Chamberlain Elaborates British Objection to Soviet Behavior. 21 November 1924	246
Soviet Reply to Chamberlain's Note and Denunciation of the "Zinoviev Letter." 28 November 1924	247
Soviet Response to the British Note Renouncing the Trade Treaty. 28 November 1924	249
Chicherin on British-Soviet Relations. 4 January 1925	287
Stalin's Speech to the Plenum of the Central Committee on the Army and International Affairs. 19 January 1925	297
Convention and Economic Cooperation Between Japan and the U.S.S.R. 20 January 1925	299
Stalin on the International Situation and the Tasks of the Communist Parties. 22 March 1925	305
Chicherin on Events in China and Relations with Great Britain. 1 July 1925	311
Agreement Between Poland and the U.S.S.R. Regarding the Settlement of Frontier Disputes. 3 August 1925	318
The Soviet Union and the League of Nations. 23 November 1925	328

**LAW CODES AND LEGAL ISSUES**

Administrative Exile. 3 January 1923	8
Formation of the OGPU—The Unified State Political Administration. 15 November 1923	73
The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. 31 January 1924	147
The Party on Press and Literature. 31 May 1924	189

**MILITARY AFFAIRS**

Trotsky's Dismissal from his Military Positions. 17 January 1925	291
Stalin's Speech to the Plenum of the Central Committee on the Army and International Affairs. 19 January 1925	297

**NATIONALITIES**

On Party Organization—12th Party Congress. 25 April 1923	30
Implementing the New Nationality Policy. 12 June 1923	47
The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. 31 January 1924	140

**POLITICS AND POLITICAL CONTROVERSIES; THE COMMUNIST PARTY**

Lenin, "Better Fewer, But Better." 2 March 1923	10
The Party Leadership Denounces Trotsky and the Forty-Six for Factionalism. 27 October 1923	66

Zinoviev on the Party and Workers' Democracy. 1 December 1923	74
"On Building the Party"—Attempted Compromise Between Trotsky and the Trimvirate. 5 December 1923	82
Trotsky, The New Course—I: Letter to the Central Committee. 8–10 December 1923	90
Zinoviev's Rejoinder to Trotsky's "New Course" Letter. 15 December 1923	95
Stalin Responds to the Critics of the Party Leadership. 15 December 1923	100
Trotsky, The New Course—II. 28 and 29 December 1923	119
An Opposition Critique of the Party's Economic Policy. 29 December 1923	131
Party Denunciation of Trotsky, The Other Oppositionists and "Petty Bourgeois Tendencies." 18 January 1924	134
"Farewell, Ilyich"—The Party Leaders Eulogize Lenin. 26 January, 1924	140
Stalin, The Foundations of Leninism. April 1924	161
Trotsky—Lessons of October. November 1924	209
"How One Should Not Write the History of October." 2 November 1924	222
Kamenev—The Party and Trotskyism. 18 November 1924	232
Stalin—Leninism or Trotskyism? 19 November 1924	238
Preobrazhensky, The Law of Primitive Socialist Accumulation. November 1924	250
Bukharin on the Economic Controversy and the Defense of NEP. 12 December 1924	257
Stalin, Socialism in One Country Versus Permanent Revolution. 17 December 1924	277
Trotsky's "Resignation." 15 January 1925	288
Trotsky's Dismissal from his Military Positions. 17 January 1925	291
Stalin on Lenin. 21 January 1925	305
Trotsky Repudiates Eastman's Account of the Political Struggle in the Soviet Union. 1 July 1925	314
The Fourteenth Party Congress—Reports and Debates. 18–23 December 1925	329
The Fourteenth Party Congress Endorses the Stalin-Bukharin Leadership. 23 December 1925	363
The Attack on Zinoviev's Control of the Leningrad Party Organization. 28 December 1925	369
Rules of the All-Union Communist Party. 31 December 1925	371

## RELIGIOUS ISSUES

Religion and the Soviet State—Trial of the Catholic Clergy. 22 March–2 April 1923	19
Resolution on Anti-Religious Agitation and Propaganda. 25 April 1923	29
The Closing of a Monastery. 16 May 1923	44
The Anti-Religious Campaign: "The Religious Foolishness." 25 May 1923	45
"Vodka, the Church and the Cinema." 12 July 1923	64

## WOMEN, YOUTH, SOCIAL ISSUES, CONDITION OF LIFE

Club and Factory Theaters. 1923	3
The Best Soviet Teachers. April–June, 1923	42
Trotsky on Culture and Problems of Life. 10 July 1923	54
Habits and Custom. 11 July 1923	60
"Vodka, the Church and the Cinema." 12 July 1923	64

## GLOSSARY

The glossary is intended to assist those unfamiliar with Russian terminology of the period; many specific institutions are identified in headnotes to documents in which they are mentioned.

**All-Russian**—term often used to denote an institution which pertained to the entire RSFSR (Russian republic), such as in “All-Russian Congress of Soviets” or “All-Russian Cheka.” Used especially after implementation of constitution creating the RSFSR in 1918.

**artel**—artisan or agricultural cooperative.

**CC (TsK)**—Central Committee (of the Communist Party).

**CCC**—Central Control Commission (of the Communist Party).

**CEC (TsIK)**—Central Executive Committee (executive of the Congress of Soviets). See also VTsIK.

**CP**—Communist Party

**chervonets**—unit of currency introduced in 1922 as part of effort to stabilize the currency; coexisted for a period with the ruble.

**Cheka**—The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-Revolution and Sabotage; the political police until 1922.

**commissar** (sometimes commissioner, commissary)—used to denote revolutionary officials in 1917, became the official term for the main government department heads in the Soviet government, used until 1946, as in “People’s Commissar of Agriculture.” Equivalent of Minister (European) or Secretary (American).

**Constituent Assembly**—assembly elected by general popular vote with right to determine future of Russia. Elected in November 1917 and dispersed by Bolsheviks following first meeting in January 1918.

**Constitutional Democratic Party** (Constitutional Democrats, Kadets)—the major Russian liberal party.

**CPC**—See Council of People’s Commissars.

**Council for Labor and Defense (STO)**—important council of the early Soviet government, responsible especially for coordinating economic and military issues.

**Council of People’s Commissars** (Sovnarkom, CPC)—title of government established after the Bolshevik Revolution; in 1946 replaced by the term Council of Ministers.

**desiatina**—traditional Russian land measurement; one desiatina = 2.7 acres or 1.09 hectares.

**ECCI**—Executive Committee of the Communist International.

**duma**—(1) the State Duma, the parliament from 1905-1917 (especially if capitalized); (2) name of city councils before the revolution.

**Glavki** (sing. Glavk)—central administrative committees or directorates; used especially in economic departments. “Glav” at the beginning of a title usually suggests a central administrative department for that activity and is commonly translated as “chief” or “main.”

**Glavlit**—Main Administration for Affairs of Literature and Publishing.

**Goelro**—State Commission for the Electrification of Russia.

**Gosbank**—State Bank

**Gosplan**—State Planning Commission.

**GPU**—State Political Administration. Political police from 1922-1923.

**guberniia**—province, the main administrative subdivision of Russian empire and of the Soviet state until 1929.

**Gubkom**—Guberniia committee of the Communist Party.

**hectare**—metric land measurement, equals 2.47 acres.

**Izvestiia**—without a qualifier refers to the official newspaper of the Petrograd Soviet and then after the October Revolution of the Soviet government; many local soviet newspapers also tended to be named *Izvestiia*.

**IKKI**—Executive Committee of the Communist International.

**Kadets**—See Constitutional Democratic Party.

**Komsomol**—Communist Youth League.

**kulak** (pl. kulaki, kulaks)—More prosperous peasant, generally able to hire labor; applied pejoratively by Communists to any peasant opposing their policies.

**Left SRs, Left Socialist Revolutionaries**—see Socialist Revolutionaries.

**Mensheviks**—main Russian Marxist party in opposition to Bolsheviks.

**Menshevik-Internationalists**—left wing of Mensheviks, often cooperated with Bolsheviks in 1917-1918.

**Narkompros**—People's Commissariat of Enlightenment, or, alternatively, of Education (translations vary).

**Narodnik** (pl. narodniki, narodniks)—Populist(s); agrarian socialist(s).

**NEP**—The New Economic Policy introduced in 1921; also the era of NEP, i.e., the 1920s.

**Nuclei**—local party organizations, the lowest level of party organization; party cell.

**Obkom**—Oblast committee of the Communist Party.

**obshchina**—traditional Russian peasant commune.

**oblast**—large administrative subdivision used in some regions instead of guberniia; roughly a province.

**OGPU**—Unified State Political Administration. New name for the political police introduced in 1923 along with formation of the Soviet Union.

**okrug**—large administrative unit, usually subdivision of an oblast, equivalent to an uezd in a guberniia. Certain other types of administrative units also were called okrug also, such as some military districts.

**Orgburo**—The Organizational Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party; a key administrative body of the party.

**Party**—used, with or without capitalization, to mean the Communist Party, as in "the party intends to...."

**People's Commissariat**—the chief administrative departments of the Soviet government; see commissar, above.

**Politburo**—Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party; effectively the key leadership body.

**Politprosvet**—Political Educational Committee (of Narkompros).

**pood**—See pud.

**Pravda**—central official paper of the Communist Party; some local Bolshevik papers used the title also.

**Proletcult** (Proletkult)—Union of Proletarian Cultural-Educational Associations.

**pud** (pood)—Russian measure of weight, equaling 36.11 lbs. or 16.38 kilograms.

**Rabkrin**—Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate.

**Rada**—lit., Ukrainian equivalent of "soviet." Originally in political sense referred to the Ukrainian Central Rada set up in Kiev during the revolution and which proclaimed itself the government for Ukraine after the Bolshevik Revolution; later part of the Ukrainian language term for the Ukrainian Soviet government and local governments.

**raion**—smaller administrative subdistrict in some rural areas; also in some larger cities.

**Raikom**—raion committee of the Communist Party.

**Revolutionary Tribunals**—special courts set up to expedite revolutionary justice and to deal with important political cases; there also were special revolutionary tribunals for press and other purposes.

- RKP(b)**—Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the party name from the name change of March, 1918 to 1925.
- RSDRP**—Russian Social Democratic Labor Party; without further clarification can refer to either the Bolsheviks or Mensheviks, or, less frequently, to smaller groups.
- RSDRP(b)**—Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (Bolsheviks), the usual designation for the Bolsheviks before change of party name in 1918.
- RSFSR**—Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic; official name of the new state under constitution of 1918. Later terms were reversed—Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic. Middle word translated variously as Federal, Federative or Federated.
- Selkom**—village committee of the Communist Party.
- Smena vekh** (Smenovekh, smenavekhov and other forms of the term)—a movement, especially among Russian emigres and former liberal and conservative opponents of the regime, for reconciliation with the Soviet regime on the basis that it was the upholder of Russia's national independence. Used by Communist Party leaders pejoratively. Lit.: "Change of Landmarks."
- Smychka**—the policy of a close relationship between town and countryside, of workers and peasants.
- SNK**—Russian initials for Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom); used infrequently in translations.
- Socialist Revolutionaries**—peasant oriented revolutionary party, largest party in 1917 and in Constituent Assembly. The left wing emerged in late 1917 as a virtual separate party, the Left SRs, and cooperated with the Bolsheviks during the first months after the October Revolution.
- Soviet**—council in Russian. Used both as a short form name of the government (or for reference to its institutions, policies, etc.), and to refer to a variety of other institutions which use that term in their title, i.e., call themselves a council.
- Soviet of People's Commissars**—alternative translation of Council of People's Commissars (soviet = council).
- Sovnarkom**—Commonly used abbreviation for Council of People's Commissars, based on first syllable of each word (in Russian). See Council of People's Commissars.
- SRs**—See Socialist Revolutionaries.
- STO**—Soviet for Labor and Defense. See Council for Labor and Defense.
- subbotnik**—special days of voluntary work without pay for the good of society, which later became largely mandatory; lit., "saturdays."
- Tsektran**—Central Committee for Transportation.
- TsIK**—Central Executive Committee (executive of the Congress of Soviets).
- TsK (CC)**—Central Committee (of the Communist Party).
- uezd** (uyezd)—administrative subdivision of a *guberniia*.
- verst** (versta)—0.66 mile.
- Vesenka**—Supreme Council of the National Economy; also called VSNKh and Supreme Economic Council.
- volost**—rural administrative units within the *uezd*.
- VSNKh**—Supreme Council of the National Economy; also called *Vesenka* and Supreme Economic Council.
- VTsIK**—All-Russian Central Executive Committee, although often referred to simply as the Central Executive Committee, TsIK or CC.
- White Guards**—term used to refer to the Civil War opponents of the Bolsheviks, the "Whites," and at this period used to smear opponents, social groups, or political tendencies.
- zemstvo**—pre-revolutionary elected local and regional government institutions, especially in rural areas, with limited powers; abolished by Bolsheviks.
- Zhenotdel**—Women's Department of the Communist Party.

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## INDEXES

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### INDEX OF PERSONAL NAMES

- |                            |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Adler, Viktor, 92, 98, 106 | Iulianovich, 22-27         | Engels, 92, 98-99, 106,     |
| Ahmed Zogu, 288            | Butkovski, 25              | 144-145, 162-176            |
| Alexevskii, 286            | Byeloborodov, 105          | passim, 200, 212            |
| Alsky, 105                 | Byk, 105                   | Evdokimov, 349              |
| Andreev, A., 286           |                            |                             |
| Andreiev, 2                | Carter, Huntly (Huntley),  | Fadeev, A., 286             |
| Aralow (Aralov), 320       | 1, 3                       | Fedorov, L.I., 22, 25-27    |
| Artsybachev, 284           | Chamberlain, Austen, 246-  | Findley, 248                |
|                            | 247, 287, 288, 312,        | Fotieva, L., 54             |
|                            | 332                        | Fourier, 64                 |
| Balabanova, 236, 295       | Chang-Tso-Lin, 204         | Freud, 199                  |
| Bebel, 92, 98, 106         | Chernov, 97                | Frossard, 236               |
| Bednyi, Demian, 285        | Chernyshevsky, 62          | Frunze, 297                 |
| Belinsky, 62               | Chiang Kai-shek, 311       | Furmanov, Dimitri, 286      |
| Belotserkovsky, 286        | Chicherin, 89-90, 287, 311 |                             |
| Berezovskii, F., 285       | Chien, Cheng, 201, 203     | Galkin, 20                  |
| Bernstein, 92, 98-99, 106  | Chkheidze, 228, 243        | Goldoni, 8                  |
| Bezymensky, Alexander,     | Christ, 46                 | Gorbunov, N., 54            |
| 285                        | Cieplak, Ian (Jan)         | Gorky, 7                    |
| Birkenhead, Lord, 311-314  | Giatsintovich, 19-27       | Gregory, J.D., 208, 247-250 |
| Bismarck, 332              | Claudel, 2                 | Grumbach, 295               |
| Blok, 195                  | Coolidge, Calvin, 89-90    | Guesde, 92, 98, 106         |
| Boerne, 62                 | Curzon, 142, 206           |                             |
| Bogushevsky, 361           |                            | Haskell, Colonel, 54        |
| Borah, Senator, 312        | Denikin, 38, 103, 141-142  | Hegel, 221, 223             |
| Bramley, 248               | Dobrolyubov, 62            | Heine, 62                   |
| Briand, 332                | Dollar, Jim, 284           | Herriot, 307                |
| Bromley, 248               | Doronin, Ivan, 285         | Hilferding, Rudolf, 215,    |
| Bubnov, 239-240, 345       | Dostoevski, 8              | 237                         |
| Bukharin, 96, 128, 222,    | Dzerzhinsky, F., 10, 239-  | Hoglund, 295                |
| 233, 250, 257, 329-        | 240, 362                   | Hoover, Herbert, 54         |
| 30, 344-362 passim,        |                            | Huan, Lu Jung, 201, 203     |
| 363, 369                   | Eastman, Max, 314-318      | Hughes, Charles Evans,      |
| Butkevich (Budkiewicz),    | Eismond, S.F., 23, 25-27   | 89-90, 307                  |
| Konstantin                 |                            |                             |

- Ianukovich (Janukowicz),  
     P.I., 23, 25-27  
 Ilyich, Vladimir, 96  
 Inkpin, 315  
 Iunevich (Juniewicz), E.S.,  
     20, 25-27  
 Ivanov, D.A., 23, 25, 27  
  
 Jackson, 315  
 Jouhaux, 306  
  
 Kaledin, 216  
 Kalinin, M., 28, 98, 240,  
     356, 361-362  
 Kamarov, 350  
 Kamenev, L., 30, 54, 67,  
     74, 209, 214-215,  
     222, 225, 232-233,  
     236, 238-241, 329-  
     30, 347-362 passim,  
     369  
 Kamensky, V., 2, 195  
 Karakhan, Lev  
     Mikhailovich, 183,  
     204, 301-305  
 Kautsky, 92, 98-99, 106  
 Kerensky, 37, 81, 230  
 Kerzhentsev, 14  
 Ketrzynski, Stanislaw, 320  
 Khlebnikov, 195  
 Khodnevich  
     (Chodniewicz), P.V.,  
     23, 25-27  
 Khvetsko (Chwiecko),  
     L.A., 23, 25-27  
 Kogan, P., 287  
 Kolchak, 38, 103, 141-142  
 Kollontai, 239  
 Kollosov, Markus, 286  
 Kolzov, 58  
 Koo, Vi Kyuin Wellington,  
     183, 204  
 Kornilov, 214, 217, 230,  
     242  
 Kropotkina, Madame, 2  
 Kruchenikh, 195  
 Krupskaya, 353, 359  
 Krylenko, 20-24, 240  
 Kuibyshev, 316  
 Kuusinen, 207  
 Kuznetzov, 201, 203  
  
 Lacin, 240  
 Lafargue, 92, 98, 106  
 Lashevich, 353  
 Lawrence, Archbishop, 21  
 Lelevich, G., 287  
 Lenin, Vladimir Ilyich, 7,  
     30, 54-60 passim,  
     64, 77, 79, 82, 95-  
     99, 104, 106-107,  
     120, 122, 128, 132,  
     134-140 passim,  
     140-147, 157, 161-  
     183, 192, 209-221,  
     222-231 passim,  
     232, 234-237, 239-  
     245, 258-270  
     passim, 277-283,  
     289-290, 291-296,  
     305, 314-316, 336-  
     362 passim,  
     On Communist Party  
     and Soviet Govern-  
     ment, 10-18  
 Lentsner, 240  
 Lenzner, 227, 229  
 Levi, 236  
 Levi, Paul, 295  
 Libedinskii, Iurii, 286  
 Libedinsky, 61  
 Liebknecht, Wilhelm, 92,  
     98, 106  
 Litvinov, 328  
 Lomov, 239  
 London, Jack, 2, 3  
 Lozovsky, 216  
 Lunacharsky, A.V., 1, 51,  
     53, 284-287  
 Luxembourg (Luxemburg),  
     Rosa, 79, 229, 261  
  
 MacDonald, J. Ramsey,  
     205-208, 246-248,  
     250, 207, 334  
 Maisky, Em., 286  
 Maletski (Malecki), A.I.,  
     23, 25-27  
 Marinetti, 52  
 Marx, Karl, 60, 92, 98-99,  
     106, 144-146, 162-  
     165, 219  
 Matulianis, T.I., 23, 25-27  
  
 Mayakovsky, 2, 52  
 McManus, 207  
 Meierhold, 2, 4  
 Meshcheryakov, 53  
 Mikhailov, A.P., 42-43  
 Miliutin, 359  
 Ming, Chung Shih, 201  
 Molotov, 340, 357, 361-  
     362, 363  
 Murray, Gilbert, 208  
 Myaznikov, 127  
  
 Nikiforov, Georgi, 286  
 Nogin, 236  
  
 Obolenskii, 28  
 Ordjonikidze, 217  
 Ossinsky, V.V., 131  
 Ostrovsky, 8  
 Oudegeest, 306  
  
 Parvus, 229  
 Pavlov, 199  
 Peter the Great, 54  
 Pilnyak, B., 183, 195  
 Pinkerton, 128  
 Pisarev, 62  
 Pius X, 22  
 Platoshkin, Mikhail, 286  
 Plekhanov, 166, 228, 230  
 Pletnev, V., 2, 286  
 Poincare, 307  
 Ponsonby, Arthur, 250  
 Pope, The, 21, 26  
 Preobrazhensky, 97, 99,  
     101-104, 136, 250-  
     251, 257, 259-276  
 Pronsketis, A.P., 23, 26-27  
 Purcell, 248  
 Pyatakov, 101, 104  
  
 Rachovskii, Vasilii, 286  
 Radek, 137  
 Radek, Karl, 199  
 Rafail, 97, 101-102  
 Rakovsky, Christian, 157,  
     205, 208-209, 246-  
     247, 249, 287-288  
 Reed, John, 239  
 Reed, Mayne, 128  
 Reisner, 2

- Renaudel, 295  
 Rodov, S., 287  
 Ropp, Archbishop, 23-25  
 Rosenholtz, 105  
 Rubiner, Frida, 51  
 Rudzutak, 362  
 Rutkovski, F.F., 20-23, 26-27  
 Rykov, 236, 353-354, 356, 361-362
- Safarov, 362  
 Salutzky, 348  
 Sapronov, 97  
 Sapronov, T., 28, 101, 105-106  
 Sarkis, 346, 362  
 Sassenbach, 306  
 Scharov, Alexander, 285  
 Schiedemann, 99  
 Sergeevsky, Nikolai, 43  
 Seifullina, Lydia, 286  
 Serafimovich, A., 285  
 Serebryakov, 136  
 Serrati, 236  
 Shakespeare, 8  
 Sharnas (Sarnas), I.I., 24, 26  
 Shikshaeva, Nadezhda I., 44  
 Shlyapnikov, 240  
 Shotman, 240  
 Sikorski, 28  
 Sinclair, Upton, 8  
 Singer, 92, 98, 106  
 Smirnov, 136  
 Smirnov, V.M., 253  
 Smith, 248  
 Sokolnikov, Grigorii, 222, 239, 350-360  
     passim  
 Sorin, 228  
 Sosnovsky, L., 287  
 Souvarine, 295
- Stalin, 30, 36, 67, 68, 73, 74, 95, 100, 134, 140, 209, 222, 232-233, 238-239, 250, 291, 329-330, 351-362  
     passim, 363, 369  
     on Army and International Affairs, 297-299  
     on International Situation and Tasks of Communist Parties, 305-308  
     on Lenin, 305  
     on Socialism, 277-283  
 Stepniak, 284  
 Stresemann, 332  
 Stukov, 101, 104  
 Sukhanov, N., 239-240, 259  
 Suvorin, 196  
 Sverdlov, 239-240  
 Synge, 8  
 Syrkin, 239
- Tambuliski, 230  
 Tarasov-Rodionov, 286  
 Tikhon, Patriarch, 19  
 Tikhonov, 200  
 Tillett, 248  
 Toler, 8  
 Tolstoi, Alexey, 199  
 Tolstoy, Leo, 8  
 Tomsky, 352-353, 361-362  
 Trachillo, Ivan, 286  
 Tredyakov, 52  
 Tretyakov, S., 286  
 Troigo (Trojgo), I.I., 23, 25, 27  
 Trotsky, Leon, 30, 54, 60, 64, 66-67, 75, 82, 90, 95-100, 101, 106-107, 119, 134-136, 140, 143, 194, 209, 222, 232, 232-238, 238-246, 255, 277-282, 291-297, 347, 354, 356-357, 361  
     Repudiation of Eastman's Account, 314-318  
     Resignation, 288-291  
 Turner, 248
- Uritsky, 239-240  
 Uspensky, Gleb, 60  
 Ustralov, 342
- Valaitis, Sigismund, 285  
 Vandervelde, Emile, 1  
 Vasilevski (Wasilewski), A.M., 22, 25-27  
 Vengerova, 2  
 Vinov, L.F., 321  
 Volodarsky, 240  
 Volseski, Alexey, 286  
 Vsevolod, Ivanov, 286
- Wrangel, 38
- Yermansky, 14  
 Yoshizawa, Kenkichi, 301-305  
 Yudenich, 38
- Zalutzky, 350  
 Zankov, 230  
 Zarge, 144  
 Zarubin, 46-47  
 Zinoviev, 30, 67, 74, 95, 100, 140, 144, 205-207, 208, 209, 214-215, 225, 232-233, 236-237, 239-241, 246-248, 291, 329-30, 343-362  
     passim, 363, 369

## INDEX OF SUBJECTS

- Abkhazians, 39  
 Agriculture, 16, 108-110, 116, 322, 328  
 Ajarians, 39  
 Alcoholism, 64-66
- Amsterdam Federation, 306-307  
 Anglo-Soviet Conference, 157-161  
     passim  
 "April Theses", 122, 242  
 Armenians, 39, 142

- Arts, 51-53, 195-200
  - Cinema, 64-66
  - Theater, 1-8
- "August" Bloc, 223, 243-244
- Azerbaijanians, 39, 142
- Baptists, 45
- Bashkirs, 142
- Bednota*, 359
- Belorussians (Byelorussians), 28, 142
- Bolshevik Revolution (1917), 3, 25, 27, 37-39, 55-58 passim, 64, 77, 79, 178, 193, 194-200, 209-221, 222-232, 233-236, 238, 277-283, 284, 289-290, 293-295, 317-318, 334, 358
- Bolshevik*, 361
- Boxer Indemnity, 183-187 passim
- Brest-Litovsk, Treaty of, 128, 224, 234, 236-237, 241, 292
- Chinese Eastern Railroad, 183-185, 200-204
- Christianity, Christians, 64
- Civil War, 16, 38, 47, 55, 58, 78, 81, 235
- Commerce, 113, 117-118
- Conciliationism, 220
- Constitution of the USSR, 49, 68, 73-74, 147-156
- Culture, 54-66, 80, 195-198 passim
- Currency Reform, 114-115
- Dawes Plan, 325, 332, 358
- Decree of January 23, 1918, 19-25 passim
- Deghestanians, 142
- Democratic Conference (1917), 178
- Economism, 213
- Economy, 50, 107-118, 131-134, 251-277, 320-328
- Education, 2, 30, 35, 42-44, 50-51
- Egoists, 52
- Enlightenment, Age of, 62
- Entente, 306, 332
- Exile, 8-10
- Famine, 53-54
- Fascists, 52
- February Revolution (1917), 214, 225
- Feudalism, 197
- Finns, 174
- Fishery Convention of 1907, 299-300
- Foreign Trade, 112, 117, 324
- Forty-Six, the, 67, 82, 131, 135
- Franco-Prussian War, 332
- French Revolution, 210
- Futurists, Futurism, 51-53, 195-197
- Geneva Conference, 137
- Genoa Conference, 333
- Georgians, 142
- Great Powers, 298, 312, 314, 328, 331, 333
- Great Russians, 36-41 passim, 49, 260
- Guarantee Treaties, 364
- Gudok* (Whistle), 189
- Hague Conference (1899), 332
- "Hero of Labor", 44
- Hungarians, 174
- Imagists, 52, 195
- Industry, 110-111, 116-117, 322-324
- International Relations
  - American Refusal to Recognize Soviet Government, 89-90
  - Anglo-Soviet Conference, 157-161
  - China, 183-188, 200-204, 311-314
  - Great Britain, 205-209, 246-250, 287-288, 311-314
  - Japan, 299-305
  - League of Nations, 328-329
  - Poland, 318-320
  - Stalin's Speeches, 297-299, 305-308
- International Press Correspondence*, 51, 119, 330
- Irish, 174
- Izvestiia*, 19, 22, 27, 44, 139, 157, 287, 290
- Jews, 66
- July Days, 213-217 passim, 242
- Kirghiz (Khirghiz), 39, 142
- Krest'ianskaia Gazeta*, 189
- Kritika ekonomicheskoi platformy oppositsii*, 257
- Kuznitsa*, 199
- Labor, 64
- Laws, Legal Issues
  - Administrative Exile, 8-10
  - OGPU Formation, 73-74

- USSR Constitution, 147-156
- The Party on Press and Literature, 189-194
- LEF, 51-53
- Left Opposition, 67, 101, 104, 107, 131, 225, 314, 329, 369
- Lenin Enrollment, 162, 190, 293, 296
- Leningradskaiia Pravda*, 362, 370
- Leninism, 97, 104, 144-146, 161-183, 190, 206, 232-237 passim, 238, 243-246, 258-274 passim, 289-290, 291-296, 339-362 passim, 364, 366, 368-369
- Literature, 189, 193, 194-200, 284-287, 308-311
- Locarno Conference, 328-329, 332, 333, 364
- Manilovism, 182
- Martovites, 244
- Marxism, Marxists, 41-42, 48, 51, 52-53, 59, 82, 99, 105, 125, 129-130, 161-166, 177, 198, 212, 216, 221, 223, 226, 310
- Marxist-Leninists, 145, 260
- May Day, 6-7
- Mezhrayontsi, 221, 228
- Mogilevskaia Khronika*, 26
- Moslems, 29
- Mukden Agreement, 204
- Narodniks, 62, 261
- Nashe Slovo*, 227
- Nationalities, 35-42, 47-51, 147-148
- Navrodniks, 220-221
- New Economic Policy (NEP), 2, 14, 29, 32, 38-39, 52, 56, 58, 67, 75-76, 83-87, 94, 97, 101, 103-104, 107-115 passim, 128, 132, 136-137, 146, 235, 250, 257, 280, 293-294, 321, 330-360 passim, 365
- Nichevoki, 52
- Nikolaievsk incident, 304
- Novaia ekonomiiia* (The New Economics), 250
- Novaya Zhizn*, 215
- October Revolution: see Bolshevik Revolution (1917)
- Ossetians, 39
- Otzovists, 244
- Paris Commune, 145, 172, 210
- Poles, 174, 229
- Populism, 289
- Portsmouth, Treaty of, 299, 303
- Pravda*, 42, 45, 54, 78, 94, 100-101, 119, 139, 190, 194, 214, 216, 222, 227, 238, 257, 290, 306, 330, 360
- Pravda* (Austrian), 96
- Press, 189-194
- Rabochaia gazeta*, 305
- Red Calendar, 8
- Red professors' opposition, 354, 356-357
- Religion, 19-30, 29-30, 44-47, 64-66
- Renaissance, the, 197
- Revolution of 1848, 210
- Revolution of 1905, 77, 220
- Revolution of 9th March, 1917, 185
- Riga Treaty (1921), 21
- Russian Orthodox Mission, 186
- Serbs, 174
- Slavophile, 196
- Smena vekhi*, 310
- "Smenovekhov", 85
- Sotsial Demokrat*, 279
- Sotsialisticheskii vestnik*, 67
- Soviet-Polish War, 318
- Tatars, 142
- Times, The*, 157
- Trade Unions, 6, 88, 112
- Trotskyism, Trotskyites, 96, 223, 228, 232, 234-237, 238, 243-246, 258-259, 277, 289, 292-293, 296-297
- See also Forty-Six, Left Opposition
- Turkmenians, 39, 142
- Ukrainians, 28, 39, 49, 142
- Uzbeks, 39, 142
- Versailles, Treaty of, 160, 332
- Vestnik kommunicheskoi akademii*, 250, 259
- Vienna Conference, 160
- Volkov Power Station, 18
- War Communism, 77, 113, 137, 193, 235, 256, 292, 339-340, 345, 350-351, 367-368

*Workers' Path*, 237

World War I, 37

Youth, 51

Zimmerwald Left, 224, 228-229

Zinoviev Letter, 205-208, 209, 246-249,  
287-288

*Zvezda*, 78

## INDEX OF INSTITUTIONS

Academic Theater, 1

Actors' Theater, 2

Air Fleet, 364

All Russian Confederation of Agricultural  
and Forest Workers, 85, 116

All-Russian Sick and Wounded Red Army  
Committee, 45

All-Russian Trade Union Council, 158,  
233, 238

American Relief Administration (ARA),  
53-54

Assumption of the Holy Virgin Church,  
26-27

"Avanti", 295

Central Executive Committee (CEC), 8,  
27-28, 45, 48-49, 70, 73, 73-74,  
147, 150-154, 158, 225

Central Statistical Institution, 118

Chamber (Kamerny) Theater, 1

Chief Political Education Department, 2

Coalition Government, 221

Commissariats, 48-49, 70, 72, 73

Agriculture, 115

Enlightenment (Education), 44, 284

Finance, 49, 68, 115, 118, 152, 154,  
350

Food, 49

Foreign Affairs, 15, 22, 28, 49, 90,  
152, 154, 312, 319, 328

Foreign Commerce (Trade), 49, 152,  
154

Internal Affairs (NKVD), 8-10, 73

Justice, 21, 25, 73

Labor, 49, 152, 154

Military and Naval Affairs, 152, 154,  
289, 291

Nationalities, 36

Postal and Telegraph Service, 49, 152,  
154, 192

Supplies, 152, 154

Transport, 49, 325

War, 49

Ways & Communication, 152, 154

Commission for Interior (Domestic)  
Trade, 115, 118

Committees for Poor Peasants, 116

Communist International (Comintern), 75,  
79, 143-146 passim, 205-206, 208,  
210-219 passim, 221, 222, 225,  
229-232, 233, 246-247, 290, 294-  
296, 305, 330, 334, 60

Communist Party, 10-18 passim, 19, 23,  
43, 53, 54-60, 61, 63, 74-82, 90-95,  
95-100, 100-107, 119-131, 131-  
134, 140-146 passim, 147, 161,  
165, 179-183, 198, 211-221, 222-  
232, 232-238, 238-246, 250, 257,  
288-291, 297, 314-315, 328

Attack on Zinoviev's Control of the  
Leningrad Party Organization, 369-  
370

Denunciation of Trotsky, 134-140

Endorsement of Stalin-Bukharin  
Leadership, 363-369

on Building the Party, 82-89

on Economic Policy, 108-118

on Intra-Party Situation, 66-67

on Literature 284-287, 308-311

on Nationalities 36-42, 47-51

on Party Organization, 30-35

on Press and Literature, 189-194

on Rules of the Party, 371-382

Party Congresses (2nd), 81; (7th) 292;  
(8th) 340, 353, 356, 360; (10th) 39,  
76, 82-83, 86, 95, 101-102, 104,  
128-129, 134-139 passim, 182;  
(11th) 86, 101-102, 104, 348;  
(12th) 29-35, 47, 51, 75, 78-79, 83-  
84, 86, 101-102, 104, 108-116  
passim, 316, 337; (13th) 83, 134,  
139, 189-190, 290, 316, 345, 357

Reports and Debates of 14th Congress,  
329-362

Trotsky's Dismissal, 291-297

Communist Youth League, 86

Communist Youth Union, 138

Congress of Soviets, 49, 140, 147, 149-  
51, 216, 344,



- Resolution on Diplomatic Recognition  
by Great Britain, 156-157
- Constituent Assembly, 214-216, 225, 237
- Council of Labor and Defense, 70, 118,  
290, 354
- Council of People's Commissars, 49, 68,  
70, 73, 73-74, 104, 116, 147, 150-  
154, 215-216
- Democratic Centralists, 101, 107, 131
- Emancipation of Labor Group, 212
- First International, 145
- First Tver School Commune, 44
- Geneva University, 44
- Gosplan, 84, 115-116, 118, 133,  
GPU, 8-10, 73, 319
- Gubpolitprosvet, 8
- Immaculate Conception Church, 26
- Independent Theater, 8
- Institute for Planned Economics, 321-322
- Institute of Party History, 35
- International Liaison Bureau of Proletar-  
ian Literature, 284-285
- Jewish Central Theater, 1
- Karl Marx Theater, 2
- Komsomol, 76, 78, 191-193, 371-372
- Kuomintang Party, 311
- League of Nations, 160, 208, 328-329,  
332, 335, 355, 364
- Left Social Revolutionaries, 224, 241
- Mensheviks, 37, 67, 77, 81, 84, 96-98,  
106-107, 138, 212-221 passim,  
223-224, 228, 230, 235-236, 244-  
245, 276, 278, 282, 289, 292-293,  
296, 316
- Military Revolutionary Committee, 214
- Monastery of the Nativity of Our Lord, 45
- Moscow Academic Small Theater, 1
- Moscow Administration of Nationalized  
Property, 45
- Moscow Art Theater, 1, 8
- Moscow Comedy Theater, 2
- Moscow Soldiers' Club, 7
- Moscow Soviet, 2
- Moscow Workers' Clubs, 3
- OGPU, 73-74, 155
- Orthodox Church, 29, 65
- Petrograd Large Dramatic Theater, 2
- Petrograd Popular Theater, 2
- Petrograd Soviet, 20, 80
- Polish Mission (Moscow), 23, 26
- Pre-Parliament, 214-216
- Proletcult, 2, 3
- Provisional Government, 242, 301
- "Quotidien", 295
- Rabkrin (RKI): See Workers' and  
Peasants' Inspection
- "Rabochaia Gruppa", 85
- "Rabochaia Pravda", 85
- Red Army, 41, 55-56, 74, 76, 79, 139,  
142, 189-193 passim, 280, 296,  
299, 315, 364, 371-372, 380
- Red Navy (Fleet), 142, 191, 296, 364, 380
- Revolutionary Military Council, 288, 290-  
291, 296, 297
- Roman Catholic Church, 19-28
- Rural Commission, 340
- Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 26
- Sacred Heart of Maria Church, 26
- St. Bonifacius Church, 26
- St. Catherine's Church, 22, 25
- St. Francis Church, 26
- St. Kazimir Church, 26
- St. Stanislaus Church, 26
- Second International, 79, 92, 98, 106,  
145, 163-179 passim, 211, 295-296,  
331-333, 364,  
Agitprop, 285
- "Serapion Fraternity", 195
- Social Democrats, 165, 179, 218, 228,  
239, 292
- Socialist-Revolutionaries, 37, 84, 213-217  
passim, 236
- Soviet of Labor and Defense (STO), 74
- State Bank, 158
- State Institute of Journalism, 193
- State Planning Commission: see Gosplan
- State Political Administration: see GPU
- State Publishing Office, 317
- Supreme Council of the National  
Economy, 49, 115, 118, 121, 132-  
133, 152, 154, 325

Supreme Court, 19-28 passim, 74, 153-154  
 Sverdlov University, 99, 161-162  
 Unified State Political Administration: see OGPU  
 United States of Europe, 279  
 University of the Peoples of the East, 42, 51  
 USSR, 10-18 passim, 28, 36-40 passim, 48-50, 54, 66, 68-73, 73-74, 89-90, 97, 105, 108-109, 111, 132-133, 141-146 passim, 156-157, 157-161, 172, 183-188, 200-204, 205-206, 208-209, 247-250, 287-288, 291-295, 297, 299-305, 305-308, 311-314, 317, 318-320, 328-329, 332-338, 341-343, 358, 363-366, 369, 374

Economic Planning 320-328  
 Vatican, 21-26 passim  
 Vikzhel, 216  
 "Vorwaerts", 295  
 VTsIK: see Central Executive Committee  
 White Guard, "Whites", 82, 204  
 Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, 10-14, 18, 32, 49, 68-73, 87-88, 97, 152, 154, 189, 316, 378  
 Workers' Group, 125  
 Workers' Opposition, 128  
 Young Communist League, 43, 297, 346, 352, 361  
 Young Pioneers, 192

# INDEX OF GEOGRAPHIC AND PLACE NAMES

Abkhasia AR, 150  
 Adjaria AR, 150  
 Afghanistan, 50  
 Albania, 288  
 Alexandrovsk, 301  
 Alsace-Lorraine, 332  
 Amsterdam, 307, 331  
 Amur River, 203  
 Angora, 288  
 Armenia, 50, 148  
 Austria, 279, 332  
 Austria-Hungary, 37, 160, 287  
 Azerbaijan, 2, 38-40, 50, 148  
 Baku, 111  
 Balkans, 298  
 Bashkiria, 50  
 Belorussia (Byelorussia), 38, 50, 148, 332  
 Berlin, 52  
 Bessarabia, 160  
 Bukhara, 39-40  
 Bulgaria, 211, 221, 230-232, 294  
 Canada, 14, 306  
 Caucasus, 140  
 China, 17-18, 207, 298,

306, 311-314, 331, 333-335  
 USSR/China Agree-ment, 183-188  
 USSR/Chinese Provinces Agree-ment, 200-204  
 Danzig corridor, 332  
 Don Basin, 111  
 Donets Basin, 105  
 Doue district, 302  
 Egypt, 298, 306, 334  
 England, 218, 252, 331, 333-334  
 Estonia, 298  
 Far East, 98  
 Finland, 211, 218  
 France, 62-63, 89, 141, 156, 176, 213, 220, 279, 284, 295, 298, 306, 314, 317, 332-335  
 Galicia, 332-333  
 Genoa, 159  
 Georgia, 2, 39-40, 50, 148, 344

Germany, 14, 17, 37, 62-63, 75, 85, 123, 142, 164, 209-221 passim, 230-232, 237, 241, 279-280, 284, 294-295, 306, 328, 332-333, 335, 358  
 Great Britain, 1-2, 14, 37, 89, 141, 176, 279, 298, 299, 306-307, 364  
 British-Soviet Relations, 156-161  
 Events in China and British-Soviet Relations, 311-314  
 Zinoviev Letter, 205-209, 246-250, 287-288  
 Hague, The, 159  
 Hamburg, 231  
 Hankow, 183, 312  
 Harbin, 203  
 Hungary, 211, 218  
 Iaroslavl, 20-22, 25  
 India, 17-18, 298, 306, 334  
 Indonesia, 306

- Ireland, 206  
 Italy, 89, 156, 176, 211, 298, 335  
 Ivanovo-Vosnesensk, 370  
 Japan, 17, 176, 299-305, 306, 333, 335  
 Khorezm, 39-40, 105  
 Kostroma, 8  
 Krasnaya Presnya, 102  
 Kremlin, 291  
 Kronstadt, 235  
 Latvia, 298  
 Leningrad, 330-362  
     passim, 369, 369-370  
 London, 157-158, 208  
 Morocco, 298, 331, 333  
 Moscow, 23, 25, 26, 28, 51, 52, 54, 58, 61, 90, 95, 98, 101-102, 122, 131, 135-140  
     passim, 147, 156, 206, 217, 233, 248, 287-288, 291, 315, 317, 318, 320, 356, 362, 370  
     Arts in, 1-3  
 Mukden, 201-204 passim  
 Nagornyi-Karabakh, 150  
 Nakhichevanskaia, 150  
 New York, 65  
 Nizhni-Novgorod, 8, 370  
 North Africa, 298, 306  
 Osetia, 150  
 Outer Mongolia, 184  
 Paris, 65  
 Patachu, 186  
 Peking, 185-188, 202, 299-305  
 Persia, 333  
 Petrograd, 19-26 passim, 75-76, 78, 95, 98, 101, 129, 138, 213-221 passim, 240, 242  
     Arts in, 1-3, 8  
 Poland, 19-28 passim, 50, 129, 318-320, 332  
 Red Square, 7  
 Reval (Quarton), 90  
 Riga, 359  
 Rostov, 105  
 Roumania, 333  
 RSFSR, 8-10, 19-28  
     passim, 40, 44, 148, 150, 359, 374  
 Sakhalin, Northern, 299, 301-305  
 Saratov, 2  
 Siberia, 3  
 Smolny, 146  
 South America, 333  
 Spain, 298  
 Sudan, the, 298  
 Sukhum, 315, 317  
 Sungari River, 203  
 Syria, 331, 333  
 Tataria, 50  
 Tientsin, 183  
 Tiflis, 2  
 Tokyo, 301  
 Transcaucasia, 148  
 Tula, 61, 370  
 Tunisia, 298  
 Turkestan, 38  
 Turkey, 37, 50, 288  
 Turkmenia, 148  
 Tver, 44  
 Ukraine, 2, 36, 38, 50, 85, 148, 370  
 United States of America, 1, 14, 17, 29, 54, 109, 156, 176, 182, 209, 221, 229, 248, 284, 306-307, 317, 327, 328-329, 331-335, 364  
     American Refusal to Recognize Soviet Government, 89-90  
 Upper Silesia, 332  
 Urals, the, 370  
 Uzbekistan, 148  
 Vilna, 332  
 Vladimir Province, 43  
 Volhynia, West, 332  
 Vyborg, 370  
 Warsaw, 26  
 Washington, D.C., 90  
 Western Europe, 1, 14-18, 29, 57, 248, 280, 328, 331-334, 336, 364  
 White Russia: see Belorussia  
 Winter Palace, 2  
 Yasnaya Polyana, 199  
 Zamoskvorechye, 102

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